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ROUTE

FROM

GRENOBLE TO AOSTA,

BY THE

PASS OF THE LITTLE SAINT BERNARD.

THIS route presents to the traveller some of the most beautiful scenes of Dauphiny, of the Tarentaise, and of Piedmont. Excellent carriage-roads through the vale of Gresivaudan conduct, on either side of the river Isere, to the great route of the Cenis; that on its right bank leads by Lumbin, Fort Barraud, and Chapareillan on the frontiers of Savoy, to the Cenis road, between Chambery and Montmelian: on the left bank the road passes through Goncelin and Pont Charra, the last town on the French frontiers, and falls into the route of the Cenis at the village of Planèse, where Montmelian, its old fort,* and the valley of the Isere, present one of the finest views between Lyons and Turin.

The vale of Gresivaudan, or plain of Grenoble, one of the richest in France in corn, wine, and other products of the soil, is nowhere surpassed in scenes of picturesque beauty. From the road to Lumbin the views towards the south-east are

* It was formerly considered one of the strongest fortifications in Europe: the treachery of the governor gave it to the possession of Henry the Fourth of France in 1600. Whilst he was besieging it, he narrowly escaped with his life from a cannon-shot; and his son, Louis the Thirteenth, after having invested it fifteen months, was compelled by its gallant defender, Bens de Gavour, to raise the siege. The fort was demolished by the French in 1703, and has never since been restored.

bounded by the lofty range of mountains which forms the northern side of the Val Romanche, and from the left bank of the Isere the opposite mountains appear, by their proximity, to hang over the road beneath them, in bold and precipitous masses.

At the upper end of the valley there are some scenes which the traveller should visit. Near Chapareillan, the bold range of mountains which bounds the north-eastern side of the valley, and divides it from the Grand Chartreuse, terminates in Mont Grenier, part of which fell in 1249, and produced an interesting field for the researches of the geologist in the *Abymes de Myans*.

On the right of the road, ascending by Goncelin, near Pont Charra, are the ruins of the château Bayard, where the chevalier "*sans peur et sans reproche*" was born in the year 1476; the remains are not picturesque, except those of the old entrance; but the views from the ruined terrace are very fine, particularly towards Mont La Tuile, above Montmelian: in this direction the eye commands the scene from Pont Charra to Fort Barraud, the windings of the Isere, and beyond it the plain extending almost to Chamberry.*

At Montmelian, where the great road to the Cenis crosses the Isere, the traveller from Grenoble by Pont Charra enters upon the line of Hannibal's march into Italy. This subject of deep inquiry and great interest to the historian has been most ably illustrated in "*A Dissertation on the Passage of Hannibal over the Alps, by a Member of the University of Oxford*," which offers such clear and essential evidence as every one acquainted with the various passes of the Alps, and who is interested in the inquiry, must consider conclusive.† It traces the route of Hannibal into Italy from the Rhône, and shows that, after he had ascended the river and defeated the Allobroges, he passed the Mont du Chat, near Chamberry, thence

* Plate the first.

† There is a work on the same subject, which coincides with the "*Dissertation*," by M. J. A. de Luc, of which a second edition was published in 1825, at Geneva.

marched to Montmelian, and ascended by the right bank of the Isere to the passage of the Alps by the Little Saint Bernard.

From Montmelian to L'Hôpital Conflans, the road, which leads to the Tarentaise, ascends by the right bank of the Isere, through a succession of beautiful scenes, which are sometimes rendered more interesting by ruins of baronial castles. One of the most remarkable of these is the château Moilans, whose towers still seem to frown from their high rock on the passing traveller. In the early part of the sixteenth century this castle was purchased by one of the dukes of Savoy, and made the state prison of the duchy.

This part of the route abounds with villages, whose inhabitants appear to be numerous, and their industry is evinced by the highly cultivated state of the valley. L'Hôpital is situated on the right bank of the river Arly, which divides it from Conflans, and at the base of the hill, on the sides of which Conflans is built. A good street and excellent inns are scarcely expected by the English traveller, but these are to be found at L'Hôpital. The road up the valley of the Isere from Conflans makes a considerable turn from a north-east to a south-south-east direction, and above this inflection the scenes are more confined, and the lower ranges of mountains more richly wooded; the valley, through which there is an excellent road, is pastoral and retired in its character, though châteaux are still seen jutting out, on rocks and commanding situations, from the rich background of forest-trees. Some grand rocky scenes present themselves to the traveller before he arrives at the neat village of Aigue Blanche: beyond this place the valley narrows to a ravine, by the side of which there is a well-constructed road to Montiers, the chief town of the Tarentaise. Montiers is situated in a little plain nearly surrounded by mountains, and is celebrated for its salt-works, mines, and mineral springs.

From Montiers a mule-road leads by the valley of the Doron, over the Col de la Vanoise, to Termignon, on the great road of the Mont Cenis; a journey of interest, and of easy accomplishment in the height of summer. At the distance of a few miles

from Moutiers the road passes by the hot and mineral baths of Brida, or, as they are called in the old records of Savoy, La Perrière:* they are now much resorted to by invalids. The temperature of the water is about 96° of Fahrenheit, and it contains about 140th part of saline matter.

On leaving Moutiers, to pursue the route to the Little Saint Bernard, the Isere is still ascended, but in another direction, nearly parallel to the road from Montmelian to Conflans: for a short distance the ascent is rapid, through a ravine; then leaving the Isere, the road passes by the village of St. Marcel, and encounters the river again at *Le Saut de la Purcelle*, a tremendous gorge, at whose base the Isere is seen forcing its passage. The road is carried over the rocks three hundred feet, nearly perpendicular, above the river, to enter the valley of Centron, where, though the vine is still cultivated, and the valley is studded with villages, it assumes a comparatively sterile appearance; the mountain-side, which abruptly descends to the river, is clothed with pines, which now prevail among the foliage; and the mountains of the Little Saint Bernard close the vista.

After passing the village of Centron, the traveller enters, near the middle of the valley, the old town of Ayme, formerly the Forum Claudii of the Centrones; it is rich in Roman inscriptions and other evidences of early importance: the road passes through it, and continues to Bourg St. Maurice.

The plain in which this town is situated extends itself beyond Seez, up the valley of the Isere, which is a wider and more obvious route to a passage by the Alps than that which leads by the valley of the Reclus, as it presents the course of the larger stream; and the traveller is not at first prepared for the true road, by the Reclus, to the Little Saint Bernard, because this turns off to the left from Seez by a lateral valley, through which it flows into the Isere. Formerly a path led by the right bank of the Reclus; but an ill-paved and worse-preserved road

* There is an account of these baths in Bakewell's interesting Travels in the Tarentaise.

now conducts, on the other side, by Notre Dame des Neiges and Villars, to the *Roche Blanche* ; * at the foot of which the river is crossed by a good bridge, and the road winds up the mountain, by a tolerable mule-path, to Saint Germain, the last village of the Tarentaise. The Roche Blanche is a vast mass of gypsum, appearing to close the valley of the Reclus, which struggles amongst the rocks at its steep base ; its summit is covered with pines ; and, as a military position, its occupation secures the defence of the pass, whilst its occupants might march from its summit to the Col† of the Little Saint Bernard, without again descending, as the mass of exposed gypsum, which gives name to the rock, is protruded, like a headland from the mountain, at the upper end of the little plain of Villars.

The Roche Blanche is a remarkable feature in this passage, not only from its geological character, but from its historical connexion with the invasion of Italy by Hannibal. The evidence of its being the *White Rock* mentioned by Polybius, where Hannibal took up his position to defend his army from the assaults of the Centrones, during its ascent of the valley, will be found in the “Dissertation” already mentioned.

While the author of these Illustrations was sketching the Roche Blanche, a respectable-looking farmer on horseback, who was passing, rested for a moment, and said, “That, sir, is the Roche Blanche : formerly a great general called Hannibal passed this way with his army, and fought a battle here.” Tradition is good collateral evidence, though of little value alone. On many other passes of the Alps the name of Hannibal has been left by inquirers into this interesting subject, and become familiar to the peasantry. The Viso, the Cenis, the Genève, and the Grand Saint Bernard, have their traditions ; and even on the snows and glaciers of the Cervin, the author was told by his guide that the fort of St. Theodule, situate on that mountain, was built by Hannibal in his passage there ; and talked of *Tite-Live* and *Polybe* as authority for his assertions.

* Plate the second.

† The Col is the highest traversable part of a mountain.

The traditions, however, of the passage of Hannibal by the Little Saint Bernard assume a higher character ; they are not confined to the pass of the mountain, but may be traced on this route from the Rhône to Turin. The old Roman road over the Graian Alps passed to the right of the Roche Blanche ; at present, a modern path on the other side, through Saint Germain, conducts by an easy ascent above the village to the Hospice and plain of the Col :* the heavy snows which fall here in winter have induced the precaution of raising poles at certain distances to guide the traveller ; sometimes these posts have cross-pieces nailed on at the top, rather to assist the traveller's course by their direction than from any religious motive. It would employ about three hours to walk from the Roche Blanche to the Hospice on the summit of this pass. About half-way up, the view, on looking back, is striking : the valley of Centron, the road winding down the mountain to Saint Germain, the side of the Roche Blanche hanging over the Reclus, and the beautiful forms of the Mount Iseran, combine to form a fine Alpine scene.†

The Hospice on the summit is on the brink of the descent to the Tarentaise : bread, butter, and cheese, sometimes meat, and always wine, may be had there. In 1824 it was occupied by a man and his wife, with a family of hardy children. He is stationed there by the Sardinian government, and remains all the year : he is directed to assist and relieve the poor traveller gratis ; but those who can afford to pay, discharge the expenses which they incur as they would at an inn. It was formerly held by some monks from the Great Saint Bernard, whose cells and little chapel are now in ruins ; these have been left so since the year 1794, when, during the wars of Italy, France poured her republican soldiery through the defiles of the Alps. The summit of the Little Saint Bernard was then the site of some military operations, not surpassed by any deeds of daring in those regions ; but though they want the mystery and

* End vignette.

† Plate the third.

magnitude which the mists of time throw over distant events, the heroism displayed in the conquest of this pass is not forgotten in the annals of France. On the 24th of April, 1794, a division under General A. Dumas, armed only with swords and muskets, and at this most difficult and dangerous season, attacked the stations of the Austria-Sardinians on these mountains. After having for two days struggled through the accumulated snows, and crossed precipices, to contend with indestructible ramparts, bristled with artillery, and defended by superior numbers, they forced a triple redoubt on Mont Valaisan, carried a position of 1200 men on the Belveder, and compelled the guardians of the pass to defend themselves at the Hospice, which was laid in ruins; for against this position the cannon of the conquered redoubts were turned, and the French soon drove their enemies from this disastrous post, to take refuge in the valleys of Piedmont.

The plain on the summit, from the Hospice to the commencement of the descent to La Tuille, is above two miles long and about a mile in width; here Hannibal encamped his army two days, to refresh his soldiers and wait for stragglers. This place has a very convenient extent for the temporary rest of 25,000 men, to which number the army of Hannibal was now nearly reduced. He had passed the Rhône with 40,000; and Polybius states, that, on entering the plains of Italy, they were reduced to little more than half that number. The lake of Vernai, or of the Little Saint Bernard, is the source of the Doira Baltea, and does not occupy any part of the plain, but is situated far below it, at its northern extremity, at the base of the mountains which form the north-west boundary of the Col; its surface is not equal to one-hundredth part of the extent of the plain.

About twelve hundred yards north-east of the Hospice stands a broken column, the remains of a temple, which bears the name of the *Colonne de Jour*;* it is nearly twenty feet

* Plate the fourth.

high, and three feet in diameter. It is of the variety of marble called *Cipolino*, which abounds in the upper part of a neighbouring mountain, the Cramont. The column has been surmounted by a small iron cross, placed there either as an object of worship, or to preserve this relic of a temple, of which the plan may with some difficulty be traced. Farther to the north-east, and about three hundred yards from the column, is a large circle of stones, through the midst of which the road across the mountain passes; this circle is generally called, at least by the people of the Tarentaise side of the mountain, the *Cirque d'Annibal*; and the tradition is, that Hannibal held a council of war on that spot. The muleteers who pass this road, the people of the Hospice, the guides, and the neighbouring peasantry, know it only by that name. It is formed on the highest ground of the plain, and is composed of stones of the varieties found there, principally compact gneiss and clay slate, in irregular masses, varying in weight from three hundred to six hundred pounds; they are about ten feet apart, and the circle measures nearly two hundred and fifty yards round. As it would have been easy for five hundred of Hannibal's Numidians to have formed this circle in an hour with the stones which lay scattered on the plain, it is highly probable, considering the elevation of the circle, its situation near the middle of the plain, and the facility with which it might have been formed there, that it was a spot in the camp devoted to the general, his council, or some religious observances of the Carthaginian army.

From the middle to the north-eastern extremity of the plain, a magnificent spectacle is presented by Mont Blanc, as it towers over the Cramont and range of mountains south-east of the Allée Blanche. The traveller who would enjoy one of the finest scenes in the Alps should ascend the Belveder, one of the mountains which bound the Col of the Little Saint Bernard. After an hour's easy ascent from the Hospice, which may be accomplished on a mule, an unrivalled Alpine panorama would lie before, beneath, and around him. Mont Blanc,

with its grand glaciers of the Miage and the Brenva, which appear to stream from its sides, the Great Saint Bernard, the high summits of the Cervin and Mont Rosa, the immense glacier of the Rutor extending sixteen leagues, the Mont Iseran, and a thousand intermediate peaks, would be presented in magnificent succession. A similar scene may be observed from the Valaisan, but this is more difficult of access. The mountain on the north-west of the Hospice, the Belle-face, is still more difficult to climb, and the scene from its height does not repay the trouble of attaining it, as the finest object, Mont Blanc, is concealed by the intervention of the mountain of the Bottomless Lake.

From no part of the passage of the Little Saint Bernard or the surrounding mountains can the "plains of the Po" be seen, which Polybius says Hannibal pointed out to his army to reanimate them after the fatigues of their march and ascent. This stumbling-block in the investigation of the passage of the Alps by Hannibal is removed only on the Col de Viso, whence the plains of Italy can be seen; but the utter want of agreement with Polybius in every other part, and the insurmountable difficulties which must have been presented to the Carthaginian army by the pass of the Viso, prevent any one acquainted with it from adopting the opinion that Hannibal went that way.

It is stated, however, by Polybius, in cap. 54, that Hannibal pointed out also the situation of Rome. It would have been as possible from any part of the Alps to have pointed out that of Athens. The author of the "Dissertation" thinks that the direction and bearings of the plains of the Po and Rome are all that is meant: the whole sentence thus indicates, that he pointed out the situations in which those places lay, the mountain-ridges which bounded the valleys leading to the plains of the Po, and the streams flowing from the summit in that direction, to the truth of which his guides, the Cisalpine Gauls, who accompanied him, could bear testimony. All this might have been shown to the soldiers by merely going to the

end of the little plain of the camp, and observing the deep valley of La Tuille below them.

Soon after leaving the Cirque d'Annibal, the ruins of a large building are passed, which appears to have been destroyed by fire, probably during the war of 1794. A little beyond, the plain terminates, and the scene opens in the valley of La Tuille, to which a rugged path descends as far as Pont Serrant. Before any road was made, the difficulties and dangers of this precipitous route must have been very great: here occurred the heavy losses which Hannibal sustained in the descent of his army. At Pont Serrant these must have been particularly fatal; for the river which flows from the lake of the Little Saint Bernard, rushes across the path through a frightful gorge, and falls on the right into the valley which leads to La Tuille. This gorge is about two hundred feet deep, yet so narrow that it is crossed by a wooden bridge twenty-three paces in length, of which twelve only are actually clear of the rocks at the top. In descending to La Tuille, this gulf cannot be seen until within one hundred feet of the brink, as it presents no other appearance than that of a *haec-haec* in an English pleasure-ground: it is easy to imagine how destructive such a place must have been to an army descending.

Three quarters of an hour* from Pont Serrant the traveller reaches La Tuille. A little below this village there is a spot of much importance in establishing the fact of Hannibal's passage by this route. The Doire, joined by a torrent which descends from the vast glaciers of the Mont Ruitor, forces its way through a deep ravine about a quarter of a mile below La Tuille: before arriving at this defile the river is crossed by a wooden bridge, and a safe road winds up and round the corner of a lime rock, out of which the present road has been cut: this was made, about fifty years since, to avoid the dangers of the old road, which passed on the other side of the torrent, and which was almost annually destroyed by the

* Distances are usually reckoned by time in the Alps.

avalanches which fell into this gulf from the south-eastern base of the Cramont.* It sometimes happens, that the snow accumulates in this ravine in so great a quantity, that it remains unmelted during the year; and it is stated by Polybius, cap. 55, that this unusual circumstance occurred in the season of Hannibal's passage, and that it occasioned a day's delay and great loss to his army, from the men and beasts of burden falling over this mass of snow, or sinking through it.† The distance of this gorge from the encampment on the summit, and extent of site liable to these avalanches and accumulations of snow, agree exactly with the account of Polybius. The author of this work, who had not on a former visit to the Little Saint Bernard, in 1824, seen any snow in this ravine, found a large mass there at the end of August 1826.

The road from this ravine continues high above the torrent, until it descends rapidly by a *tourniquet* and crosses the river near La Balme. Below this place the valley widens a little; but near the descent to the baths of St. Didier the stream sinks into a deep abyss, and forces its way, almost in darkness, through a tremendous rift in the mountain, whence it escapes into the Val d'Aosta. The road on the left bank leaves the river so far beneath, that its struggles are only *heard*. Fearful accidents have happened here, though the road is good and there is no appearance of danger: several crosses, the chronicles of death, are near, to solicit prayers for the repose of the souls of the unfortunate, whose humble memorials are their initials, and the dates of the accidents, preceded by P I, or, as it is sometimes carved on the cross, *Péril ici*.

Few scenes in the Alps are more magnificent than the range of Mont Blanc, seen from this descent to Pré St. Didier; but

* Title vignette.

† It is important to notice the statement of Polybius, that "the beasts of burden also, when they endeavoured to rise from their fall, broke through the surface of the snow, and remained there with their loads, as it were wedged in." This could only have happened in a situation where, as in this ravine, the water had sub-melted the snow as it passed beneath; for as the feet found no support, the beasts could not extricate themselves.

the finest *effect* under which the author ever saw it was by moonlight. Nothing can be imagined more beautiful than the “Monarch of Mountains,” and his vast attendant masses, seen under her illumination: the snow, in shadow, was so near the colour of the sky, that its form could not be distinguished; whilst the part which was lit by the moon was sharply seen against the dark sky, of an indescribably pale whiteness, apparently suspended in air; for below the snow, the mountains could not be perceived in the haze and darkness.

There are warm springs at Pré St. Didier; the baths are frequented by the Piedmontese during the season: the visitors are neither so numerous nor so respectable as those who establish themselves for the summer at the mineral springs of Courmayeur, a town about a league distant, at the head of the Val d’Aosta. From the baths, Mont Blanc and the range of the Alps which closes the head of the Val d’Aosta form one of the finest scenes illustrative of this pass.* The river which descends from the Little Saint Bernard gushes from the deep ravine at the base of the Mont des Bains, and soon after falls into the great mass of water, which, flowing from its source in the Lac de Combal, and having collected tribute from all the eastern glaciers of Mont Blanc, pursues its way through the Val d’Aosta to join the Po in the plains of Italy. It is accompanied by a carriage-road through the valley, from Courmayeur to Ivrea in the plain.

A good road from Pré St. Didier joins that of the Val d’Aosta, after crossing the Doire by an excellent bridge. Thence a rapid descent for a league conducts the traveller through the town of Morges, and an hour lower in the valley, to the town of La Salle. This part of the valley abounds with fine scenes, and the picturesque is greatly aided by the grand and massive forms of the chestnut-trees, whether seen as proximate objects, or in distant forests on the sides of the mountains.

Below La Salle the valley closes into a deep defile, and the

* Plate the fifth.

road cut out of the rock is carried high on the right bank by Fort Roc, a place admirably adapted for the defence of the passage: deep chasms are left covered only by platforms, which may be readily removed, and the road thus rendered impassable: at present, strong railings or walls defend the traveller from the danger of falling over the precipices into the gulf below. The scenes in this part of the valley are very wild and grand, particularly on looking up the deep ravine to where Mont Blanc closes the scene with a magnificent back-ground.*

From Fort Roc the road rapidly descends to Ivrogne, beyond which the valley widens; the road continues through it to Villeneuve, and at a distance of about twenty miles from Pré Saint Didier the traveller enters the city of Aosta.

It will appear extraordinary to any person travelling by this route, particularly if he be acquainted with the great roads made by Napoleon over the Simplon and Cenis, that this pass should have been allowed to remain a mule-road from Bourg Saint Maurice to Pré Saint Didier. The Col of the Little Saint Bernard is not much higher than that of either of the great passes mentioned, whilst the facilities offered by this route to the engineer and the traveller are considerably greater than those found on either of Buonaparte's roads into Italy. It is said that Napoleon had directed surveys of the Little Saint Bernard to be made, with the intention of constructing a great road across it. In the time of the Romans it was made a carriage-road by Augustus; and though few vestiges of the old road remain, yet the ease with which it might be reconstructed may be inferred from the facts, that a column of 6000 Austrians crossed it with ten pieces of cannon in 1815, and the author of this work in 1824 had a light cabriolet taken over it without dismounting.†

It is said to be the policy of the government of Sardinia to neglect all roads which do not, after crossing the Alps, neces-

* Plate the sixth.

† Saussure says, speaking of the Little Saint Bernard, "Ce passage des Alps est un des plus facile que je connoisse."

sarily lead to Turin. The objection does not apply to this, which conducts directly to the capital by the Val d'Aosta; and as both sides of the Little Saint Bernard are within the territory governed by Sardinia, the subjects of this state, in the event of the pass being opened by a good road, would be the people chiefly benefited: there are already excellent roads from Chamberry to St. Maurice, and from Courmayeur to Turin. A diligence goes regularly from Chamberry to Moutiers, and every variety of carriage may be found in the Val d'Aosta.

The summit of this mountain and its approaches are free from all dangers of avalanches; and the unrivalled beauties of the valleys of the Isere and Aosta would induce many travellers to enter Italy by this route, which is as short as any other, if there were a carriage-road across the mountain. But in whatever state the road may remain, the beauty and the interest of the pass, particularly considered as the route of Hannibal, will induce many to examine it, and the examination cannot fail to be highly interesting. Besides the concurrence with the ancient itineraries, other evidence of the agreement of this route with the account of Polybius (the only early author upon this subject that can be trusted), will be found during its course, and traditions in aid of these extend along the whole line of march.

In a work like this, intended to be descriptive rather than historical, it is impossible, from the limit proposed to the text, to enter into a defence of the opinion which the author feels himself entitled to hold, that the passage of Hannibal was by the Little Saint Bernard. He has read every work upon the subject to which he could get access, and traversed the Alps by twenty-four different passes into Italy: these passes include every route by which the various theorists have led the Carthaginian army, and all by which it was possible for that army to have crossed the Alps; and these researches and examinations have induced the conviction, that the Pass of the Little Saint Bernard alone is that by which, according to the account of Polybius, Hannibal led his army into Italy.

ROUTE

FROM

LUCERNE TO DOMO D'OSSOLA,

BY

THE GRIMSEL AND THE GRIES.

THE Pass of the Grimsel is much frequented in the height of summer: the fine scenery of the Oberhasli and the upper valley of the Aar, and the direct communication of these by the Grimsel with the Haut-Valais and the glaciers of the Rhone, offer inducements to the traveller to make this passage of the Alps, and will repay the fatigue of the excursion.

From the Haut-Valais a path ascends by the glaciers of the Rhone, to the pass of the Furca, which leads into Italy by the Mount Saint Gothard; another route descends through the Valais to Brigg, where the great route of the Simplon offers its facilities to those who would enter Italy by Domo d'Ossola. The passage of the Gries, however, though a less known, is a more direct route to Domo d'Ossola, from Obergestelen, a village in the Haut-Valais; and it can be as easily accomplished on mules as the passage of the Grimsel, whilst the scenes of wildness and grandeur presented in the route of the Gries are nowhere exceeded in the Alps.

There are few events of historical importance associated with this mountain route; and it ought, perhaps, to have given place to some pass of more extensive communication;

but the picturesque scenery presented in its course, and the interest felt in the subject by those who have crossed the Grimsel, have induced the author, in this part of his work, to illustrate the route from Lucerne to Domo d'Ossola, by the Brunig, the Grimsel and the Gries.

A short and good road leads from Lucerne to Winkel, where boats may be taken to Alpnach, across that part of the beautiful lake of the Four Cantons which bears the name of the Lake of Alpnach, and into which the celebrated slide, so well described by Professor Playfair, formerly descended, by which fir-trees were discharged from the high forests of Mount Pilate into the lake at its base, with a rapidity and force which left the observer equally astonished at the fact and the contrivance. The slide has now fallen into decay. The last use which was made of this extraordinary apparatus was for the descent of the timber employed in building the new church and spire, the finest modern ecclesiastical structure in Switzerland, which was erected a few years since at Alpnach.*

* The peace of 1815 destroyed the value and importance of this slide to its projectors, as the facility of obtaining timber in Holland from other countries after that period defeated the object for which the slide was erected, the supply of the Dutch arsenals, and the demand for its employment failed to support even its expenses. It was finished in 1812. The engineer who conceived and completed the bold project of bringing down, from an elevation of 2500 feet, the enormous firs which clothed the sides of Mount Pilate, was M. Rupp, of Wurtemberg. He formed a joint-stock company of proprietors, who, with funds not exceeding £10,000, £3000 of which were laid out in the purchase of the forest, constructed a wooden trough, nearly eight miles and a half in length: the materials with which it was built, it is true, were of small value, and at hand in the forest through which, nearly the whole way, the line was carried. The internal width of the slide was generally about five or six feet at the top, and from three to four feet in depth, and it was formed of three trees, squared, and laid at the bottom, that in the centre being hollowed to receive streams of water, which in many places were projected into the trough; other trees were then so laid parallel to these, that the internal form was rounded, and of sufficient capacity for the largest trees to lie in or to move along freely. This extraordinary trough required 30,000 trees for its construction. It was generally supported upon cross timbers; these were again supported by uprights fixed in the ground at various heights, depending upon the variation of the surface upon which they rested: it crossed three great ravines,—the depth of one of these, where the slide was carried round the face of the rock, was 157 feet below it,—and in two places it was passed under ground. The declivity of this slide greatly varied: for about 500 feet from its commencement, its inclination was $22^{\circ} 30'$, then it became less steep, and in some of

From the village of Alpmach the road ascends to Sarnon, a neat Swiss town, situated at the northern extremity of a little lake which bears its name, and continues around the eastern shore to the ascent of the Kaiserstuhl, up which the road winds to attain the lake of Lungern. At the village of Lungern the route ceases to be practicable for *chars*: a mule-road leads to the summit of the Brunig, or it may be attained by a foot-path, which is shorter, and lies through scenes that are beautiful from their retired and sylvan character, and in which the traveller sees nothing to remind him of his proximity to the Alps.

On the col of the Brunig, which divides the canton of Unterwalden from that of Berne, there is a toll-house and a station of *gens d'armes*: here the road separates; one branch

its circuitous turns almost horizontal: the average of its declivity was not more than one foot in 1768; yet trees of 100 feet in length, placed root end foremost into the trough at the top, were discharged in six minutes into the lake, passing an observer with the "noise of thunder and the rapidity of lightning." The trees brought down to the lake were formed into rafts, which were floated down the rapid stream of the Reuss, thence into the Aar, and by the Rhine to Holland; and within a month of their having left the forests of Mount Pilate, they traversed a thousand miles to the German Ocean. Napoleon had contracted for all the timber thus brought down the Rhine.

"We saw," says Professor Playfair, "five trees come down: the place where we stood was near the lower end, and the declivity was inconsiderable (the bottom of the slide nearly resting on the surface), yet the trees passed with astonishing rapidity. The greatest of them was a spruce fir, a hundred feet long, four feet in diameter at the lower end, and one foot at the upper.

"The greatest trees are those that descend with the greatest rapidity; and the velocity as well as the roaring of this one was evidently greater than of the rest. . . . In viewing the descent of the trees, my nephew and I stood quite close to the edge of the trough, not being more interested about anything than to experience the impression which the near view of so singular an object must make on a spectator. The noise, the rapidity of the motion, the magnitude of the moving body, and the force with which it seemed to shake the trough as it passed, were altogether very formidable, and conveyed an idea of danger much greater than the reality. Our guide refused to partake of our amusement: he retreated behind a tree at some distance, where he had the consolation to be assured by Mr. Rupp, that he was no safer than we were, as a tree, when it happened to bolt from the trough, would often cut the standing trees clear over. During the whole time the slide has existed, there have been three or four fatal accidents, and one instance was the consequence of excessive temerity. . . . In rainy weather the trees move much faster than in dry. We were assured, that when the trough was everywhere in its most perfect condition, the weather wet, and the trees very large, the descent was sometimes made in as short a time as three minutes."



leading on the right to the lake of Brientz, another on the left to Meyringen and the Oberhasli.

From the toll-house, the Alps present a grand appearance as they rise over the wooded sides of the hill which sweeps down to the little plain and village of Brunigen. After a short descent, the vale of Meyringen presents itself to the view of the traveller, spread out beneath him, studded with villages, pasturages, and forests, and surrounded by the peaks of the Grimsel and the mountains which bound the Pass of the Scheidegg; the Wetterhorn, and the Eiger. When pointed out by the guide, the traveller may perceive the fall of the Reichenbach, descending from the Scheidegg, which, though actually of great height, and often a large mass of water, forms, from this spot, so mere a speck in the magnitude of the surrounding objects, as to create a doubt of its identity.

Meyringen, the chief town in the valley of Hasli, is a place of much resort to Alpine travellers; situated at the bases of the Scheidegg and the Brunig, and at the entrance to the Oberhasli, which leads to the Grimsel, it is, during summer, the point whence various excursions commence, or where many terminate; and it possesses for these the comforts and advantages of an excellent inn.

The fine fall of the Reichenbach, on the side of the valley opposite to Meyringen, and those of the Alpnach and other torrents which descend into the Hasli, give to this neighbourhood a deserved celebrity amongst the picturesque localities of Switzerland.

In ascending towards the Grimsel from Meyringen, the head of the plain is shortly attained, and thence the road rises rather abruptly above a deep fissure cut by the Aar through the rocks which separate, like an embankment, the vale of Meyringen from that of Imgrund. The view of the former valley is beautiful from the ascent to this embankment; and the road lies amidst numerous beeches and other trees which

remind the English traveller of similar forest scenes in England. The little plain of Imgrund associates with itself every pleasurable emotion which a pastoral life can excite—a place where Gesner might have dreamt his life away, it seems so separated from the busy scenes of the world. From Imgrund the road rapidly ascends through forests of larch and beech, and often overhangs at a great height the deep torrent of the Aar; thence descending towards the river in a narrow valley, the traveller reaches Guttanen, the last village where there is an inn in the ascent to the Grimsel. From Guttanen the difficulty of the road and the sterility of the valley increase. The Aar is twice crossed before reaching Handek, where a few châteaux are established amidst glaciers and cataracts, and scenes the most stupendous, savage, and dreary.* At a short distance from the châteaux is the great fall of the Aar, where other torrents joining it at the head of the “hell of waters,” they fall together with a horrible fracas into a deep gulf, which the traveller can overhang from some projecting rocks above, but the base is concealed from him by the mist in the basin which receives the torrents. Deep in the ravine the Aar is seen to pass on, a mere line, amidst the rocks that confine it: beyond lie the distant valley and the mountains which bound the horizon.†

The fall can be seen from below at a station where less sense of danger is excited, but the effect of the scene is not so striking as from the head of the cataract.

Above Handek the barren and savage character of the valley increases, and about half a league beyond the châteaux, the road, rising high above the torrent of the Aar, and on the brink of a precipice, passes over the smooth, convex,

* The mountaineers in the châteaux of Handek distil from the root of a variety of gentian the most detestable spirituous liquor that ever the acquired taste of man has taught him to endure.

† Title Vignette.

and inclined surfaces of masses of granite of great extent; these are worn smooth by avalanches which have swept away the barriers that, from time to time, have been raised to guard the traveller in this fearful part of the passage, which is particularly dangerous when the surface has been wet and has frozen: travellers generally dismount here, as a slip of the mule's foot would be inevitable destruction,* and it is a situation in which a man can walk with greater security. The largest surface bears the name of the *Höllen-platte*,† and is 120 paces across. From Handek to the Hospice of the Grimsel, the Aar is often traversed on bridges, which appear to be ill-constructed, and in situations so dreary as to excite ideas of danger which do not in reality exist, though the foaming torrent of the Aar as it passes beneath would leave any escape from accident hopeless. There is, at a short distance from the worst of these, some relief from this idea of danger, if not from dreariness, at a little pasturage called Roderichs-boden; about a league beyond, and over a road still rugged and sterile, the traveller reaches the Hospice of the Grimsel, situated 6000 feet above the level of the sea, where, during what is considered *the season*, scarcely a day passes without visitors; and often these are too numerous for the accommodations which have been provided. The Hospice is an inn, and the man who holds it is appointed to remain there from March to November, to assist poor travellers, gratis; the expense is met by subscriptions in Berne, Geneva, and other cantons of Switzerland: the situation of the Hospice is extremely dreary; it is surrounded by naked rocks, and on the brink of a little dark lake, rendered

* The author was informed by his guide, that upon one occasion a person whom he accompanied chose to ride, in spite of remonstrance; the mule slipped, the guide seized the clothes of the traveller, whose feet were fortunately out of the stirrups, and saved him; but the mule fell over the precipice into the gulf, and was destroyed.

† Infernal table.

darker by contrast with patches and beds of snow which lie unmelted through the year on its shores.* The greatest elevation of the passage is, according to Saussure, 7224 English feet. It is a short hour's walk from the Hospice to the summit, and nothing can exceed the dreary prospects presented to the traveller there, the bare and rocky ground relieved only by patches of snow on the borders of a still small lake on the Valais side of the mountain, which bears a name as miserable as its aspect, the *Todten See*;† and beyond the rocks which surround the lake, nothing is seen but the tops of the mountains in the chain of the high Alps, bare, or clothed in eternal snows.

The descent to the glaciers of the Rhone is by a steep and rather difficult path. The first view of these glaciers from this route is, perhaps, the most striking in which they can be seen, because their entire mass is observed, from the summit to the base, bounded on the side by the passage of the Furca, which leads to the St. Gothard.‡ The source of the Rhone is usually visited from below, where the nearest mass intercepting the highest, leaves an impression greatly inferior to that which the vast whole produces. From the glaciers the road descends to Oberwald, at first across a marshy soil, then by a rapid path in the glen, below which the Rhone, already a torrent, foams its way.

After descending for some time over a rudely paved path, and through a little pine forest, near a chapel the traveller is struck by a beautiful view of the Haut-Valais, with the

* The glaciers of the Aar, in the vicinity of the Hospice, deserve a visit from the traveller; their vast extent, in connexion with others, exceeds belief: but withdrawn from the world, as these tremendous scenes are, they were the sites of manœuvres and battles between the Austrians and the French, during the campaigns of 1799, where many perished.

† “On l'appelle *Todten-Seen*, ou *le lac des morts*,” says Saussure, “parce qu'on y jette les corps de ceux qui meurent en passant la montagne;” but Saussure has applied this name in error to the lake, on the borders of which the Hospice is built, which is the *Klein-See*; and the story of throwing the dead there is incorrect.

‡ End Vignette.

villages of Oberwald, Obergestelen, and the mountains of the high range of the Alps, extending to the Simplon. Oberwald affords no resting-place; but accommodation and civility, very different from that which Saussure experienced there,* is now offered to the traveller at Obergestelen, a village which was a great dépôt for cheese, sent from Switzerland across the Grimsel and the Gries into the north of Italy; but the formation of the great roads across the Alps has lessened the traffic which was formerly carried on over the passes traversable only by mules.

From Obergestelen the traveller towards the Gries crosses the Rhone near the village, and descends through a forest of larches, on the left bank of the river, about half an hour, then turning through the village of Imloch, in the Eginenthal, a valley which descends from the Gries, the path rises towards this mountain, through a deep glen, in which there is a fine waterfall, and amidst vast larches, whose roots, and trunks, and branches, overhang the torrent which descends from the Gries, adding greatly to the wildness of this part of the passage, and giving to it a picturesque character; but the road soon rises by a rapid ascent above the vegetation of the larch, and the scene becomes as sterile and as savage as the approach to the Grimsel above Handek. At length the valley terminates in the glacier of the Gries, which appears to forbid all further progress; yet the route to the Val Formazza lies directly across it. On the left, and before arriving at the glacier, a difficult mountain-path leads across the Mont Luvino to Naufanen, and by the Val Bedretto to Airolo, at the foot of the St. Gothard.

The path by which the summit of the Gries is attained is very difficult, though practicable for laden mules: after attaining it, on looking back, the traveller is surprised to see, on the left, high above the valley of Egina, and even the glaciers

* *Voyages dans les Alps*, &c. § 1715.

of the Gries, that châteaux and rich mountain-pasturages, which are speckled with cattle, are still higher; and beyond the valley of Egina, which he has traversed, he sees the summits of the mountains of the Oberland Bernois. A perfectly safe path leads, in twenty minutes, across the glacier of the Gries; the greatest height of the pass is 7900 feet above the level of the sea; bare and scathed rocks rise in terrible grandeur out of the glaciers to an immense height; the silence of the place adds greatly to its sublimity; and the appearance, to the author, of one of the large eagles of the Alps, the lammergayer, which was whirling its flight around a mountain peak, increased the deep emotion excited by the solitude of the scene. The river Toccia has its rise in the glaciers of the Gries, whence it flows through the valleys of Formazza, Antigorio, and Ossola, to the Lago Maggiore.

After leaving the glaciers, the path which leads towards Italy by the Val Formazza rapidly descends, and the traveller arrives successively at little plains which appear to have been formed where mountain-falls had laid barriers or embankments across the valley, which were afterwards filled up by deposits from the torrent. From one of these little plains to another the descent is rapid and sometimes difficult. They are, considering their great elevation, rich in pasturage; and the cheese made there has a great celebrity. These plains are only inhabited in summer, except the lowest, where a little cluster of châteaux called Kehrbach, is sometimes inhabited throughout the year. The road still descending steeply, leads to another plain, where trees and the vegetation of a lower region relieve the tedium which the dreary passage of the Gries produces, and where the Toccia flows quietly through the little hamlet and valley of Auf-der-Frut: at the termination of the plain, there is a little chapel and a cross on the brink of a shelf of rocks of great depth and extent, unseen and unsuspected until the traveller has arrived at the edge of the famous fall of the Toccia, whence a difficult and zigzag path leads down on the

left bank of the torrent. From below, the appearance of the fall is very striking,* though, perhaps, not very picturesque; the river tumbles over ledges of rock in a cascade, extending at least a thousand feet, and presenting from every point of view a remarkable and beautiful scene. About an hour's walk below the fall, the traveller reaches Fructval,† where he can obtain refreshment, and better accommodation than at Formazza, though this is a larger place, and boasts of possessing an inn.

In the descent from Fructval to Formazza, a deep valley, fringed with pines, lies on the right of the road, and the village of Formazza is observed in its little plain, lying amidst the surrounding mountains, which present a fine Alpine scene.‡ The language of the inhabitants of the upper part of this valley is German, and below Fopiano, Italian: the traveller sometimes suffers by the confusion which arises from German and Italian names being given to one place; thus Formazza and Al Ponte in Italian, and Zumsteck and Pommat in German, are all names for the same village; its distance from Obergestelen is about eight hours. Near Fopiano, the road, after descending through a forest of firs, crosses the torrent by a bridge, in a very wild situation:§ vast blocks of granite fill the bed of the Toccia, amidst which the water forces its way, and, passing beneath the old arch, makes its descent between the rocks with a fearful noise. The scene in this gorge, for a short distance, is magnificent; thence the valley widens, and the road continues, often amidst blocks of

* Plate the Second.

† The severity of the winter at Fructval is very great: the landlord pointed out to the author the height which the level snow had attained in the preceding winter when it reached to the roof of his house.

‡ Plate the Third. On the spot whence this view was taken, a hideously carved figure of Christ, such as abound in the Catholic cantons of Switzerland, had, after a fall, been replaced on the cross by some pious individual, whose eye was not sufficiently correct to nail the body within reach of the arms: at a little distance it had the appearance of some victim to public justice.

§ Plate the Fourth.

granite of such enormous magnitude, that upon one of these the ruins of a feudal castle remain; and upon several, forest-trees are growing. In one place, near a bridge which leads by a path to the left bank of the river, the road passes between two of these great masses of granite.* The ruins of a village which had been destroyed by a mountain-fall, lie near the road, amidst the *débris* which overwhelmed it.

The character of wildness and confusion produced by the blocks which strew the valley, between which the mule winds its way, scarcely prepares the traveller for the fearful emotion excited by a vast, smooth, and unbroken face of granite, which, rising 400 or 500 feet, in one place actually overhangs the road. From the top a large tabular mass projects many feet, of which the plane under side is seen from below, threatening one day to fall from its present apparently insecure station. Pines are growing on its upper surface, and the increasing weight of these will perhaps hasten the catastrophe. A *wise* precaution, however, has been adopted against this probable accident: a picture of the Virgin has been fastened to the face of the rock below, and the peasantry pass with perfect confidence beneath it. A little beyond St. Rocco, the first vines announce the approach to Italy: walnut and chestnut-trees attain a great size, and vegetation luxuriates.

Near St. Michel the valley widens, and a little below Premia the road crosses a river, which descends from Mont Albrun, and falls into the Toccia: below this confluence the valley loses the name of Formazza, and takes that of Antigorio. Nearly a league from the confluence is the village of Crodo, where a Sardinian custom-house is stationed. Between Crodo and St. Marco the road twice crosses the Toccia, and the scenery is pleasing and various. A little beyond St. Marco a prospect of great beauty is presented: in the distance Domo d'Ossola is seen, in the Val d'Ossola, surrounded by the fine

* Plate the Fifth.

mountains which bound the valley; and beneath the observer lies a little plain watered by the Toccia, which flows through it.* The road towards Crevola continues on the right bank of the river, amidst scenes of great richness; and at every turn some beautiful view is presented. Near Crevola the road from St. Marco falls into the great route of the Simplon, which, after passing the celebrated bridge of Crevola upon that route, leads to the town of Domo d'Ossola.

History has scarcely mentioned the existence of such a pass as the Gries, and no military events are recorded which have inflicted the curses of war upon the quiet inhabitants of the Val Formazza. During the demand for the services of the Swiss, in the wars of the 15th century, some divisions of their troops passed by the Gries; and when Switzerland became the scene of contest between the Russians and the French, the latter availed themselves of this pass for the march of a portion of their troops, but no sites are pointed out as stained by battles. The travelling historian, therefore, may be disappointed in his passage of the Gries; but the artist, and the lover of the wild and beautiful in nature, cannot fail to remember with pleasure the scenes presented to them in their excursion by this passage of the Alps.

* Plate the Sixth. .

49



ROUTE

FROM

COIRE TO LUGANO,

BY

THE PASS OF THE BERNARDIN.

It is to the spirit and power of Napoleon that the world is indebted for the formation, among others, of those great routes across the Alps, the Simplon and the Cenis ; and his example has led other governments to the construction of similar roads, that are little inferior to those which are so celebrated. Napoleon not only overcame the difficulties presented by nature, in the mighty barrier of the Alps, to the intercourse of the different people which it divided, but he achieved a still greater conquest by destroying the prejudices of those nations who had opposed the making of such roads as would facilitate future communication.

Before the completion of the Simplon, the only roads practicable across the Alps for carriages were those of the Brenner and the Tende—passes which are situated almost at the extremities of the great chain, and formed merely to open a more free communication between states and provinces subject to the same government. Now, however, national jealousies have been removed, and a more enlightened policy has extended commercial intercourse : mule-paths have been superseded by carriage-roads : and not only have the governments of Austria, Sardinia, and Switzerland, carefully preserved the routes in the great lines of communication which

were made by Napoleon, for military or commercial purposes, but they have made other roads on their frontiers across the Alps. In this liberal policy no state has displayed more energy than that of the Grisons. The completion of the route of the Bernardin, and the progress of that of the Julier, are honourable evidence of its enterprise and perseverance, in defiance of the intrigues and interruptions of the Austrian government.

14683.

The authorities of the canton of the Grisons, in the year 1816, turned their attention to the formation of a road, practicable for carriages, across the mountain of the Bernardin. It held out the prospect of enriching their state by the transit of merchandise from the Mediterranean to Switzerland, to Germany, and by the Rhine to Holland; and as their canton extended to both sides of the Alps, from the Rhinwald to the valley of Misocco, they possessed great facilities for its accomplishment.*

The formation of the new route was begun in the year 1818, and the execution of the works was confided to M. Pocobelli, known as the engineer of the route from Bellinzona to Lugano, by the Monte Cenere.

In the year 1824, the route was completed through an extent of twenty-four leagues.† The expense of constructing

* As the money required for this undertaking greatly exceeded the means of the canton, a company was formed for raising it by shares, and contributions were also received towards the attainment of this object. The people of the canton who lived on the line of the projected road, advanced 60,000 Swiss francs; and the king of Sardinia, in whom the project found a ready advocate, by a convention made in 1813 with the government of the Grisons, contributed 280,000 francs, which was afterwards extended to 395,000; and further agreed to allow the annual transit, free of duty, of 30,000 quintals of grain and rice from Sardinia into the Grisons; he also tendered his good offices and interference, wherever they could be employed, in aid of the enterprise. The government of Sardinia justly appreciated the advantage which it would gain by the projected route, as the new roads through Piedmont from Genoa to Arona, on the Lago Maggiore, and thence by the lake to Locarno, opened a new source of commercial enterprise to the subjects of Sardinia.

† From Coire to the summit of the Bernardin, distant fifteen leagues, the road rises 5113 English feet; and from the summit to Bellinzona, distant eleven leagues and a half, the descent is 6289 feet.

the road, including the compensation to proprietors on its line, did not amount to 80,000*l.* sterling. Wood, and common lands, were granted by the government.

Formerly the bailliage of Chiavenna was annexed to the Grisons, and free intercourse existed between this canton and the Lake of Como, by the Splugen. The transit of merchandise was lightly taxed, merely to keep the road in repair, and the Grisons did not feel the necessity of making the route of the Bernardin more practicable than that of the Splugen, which was open to them for beasts of burden: but when, after the expulsion of Napoleon, the Italian bailliages were annexed to Lombardy, and the power of the Austrian government extended to the summit of the Splugen, then the establishment of the new road became of the highest importance to them; for their commerce was restrained by tolls and duties, exacted on the route of the Splugen.

The new line of road promised important advantages also to the people of the canton of the Tessin; and upon the proposition of the Grisons to construct the route over the Bernardin, the government of the former canton promised a subsidy. In the course of their negotiations in 1817, they agreed to advance 200,000 francs* in aid of the undertaking, and to complete the little space of road from Saint Vittore, the frontier village of the Grisons, in the Val Misocco, to Bellinzona. Whilst the parties waited for the ratification of this agreement by the grand council of the Tessin, the Austrian government sent emissaries into the canton, who resorted to every means in their power to stop the progress of the new road of the Bernardin, and to restrain the assistance which the people of the Tessin were disposed to give to that object. Threats and bribery were successful; the ratification was refused by the sovereign council of the Tessin, and this government, without scruple, sacrificed the commercial interests of its people, by opposing the measure, and favouring the transit of mer-

chandise by the Splugen. It not only ceased to encourage the passage by the Bernardin, but it inflicted military punishment upon some of its subjects, inhabitants of the village of Lumino, for having assisted its accomplishment by labouring to make that part of the route which lay through their territory passable for carriages. Efforts were also made by the Austrian authorities to influence, in the same way as they had in the Tessin, the patriotic members of the Grison government, but without effect; they resisted with as much dignity as resolution, and in turn threatened to destroy the route of the Splugen on their side of the mountain, if the interruption to the completion of the road of the Bernardin, between St. Vittore and Bellinzona, were any longer delayed through the intrigues of the Austrian emissaries. This bold and independent spirit, aided by the mediation of the King of Sardinia, at length succeeded, and the entire route of the Bernardin has now been accomplished.

The Austro-Lombard government foresaw that the establishment of the new road of the Bernardin would affect the commerce of the Splugen; and as early as that was begun, commenced a new road over the Splugen, to render this mountain also practicable for carriages; but neither the new road of the Splugen, nor the intrigues of the emissaries, could deter the Grisons from proceeding with the Bernardin. The Austrians constructed an admirable road on their side of the Splugen to the summit, under the direction of the able engineer Donnegana; and they expected that the Grisons, availing themselves of the accomplishment of the Austrian road to their frontier, would at least complete it to the village of Splugen, where it unites with the new route of the Bernardin; but, advantageous as it would be to the Grisons to have also a carriage-road communicating with Lombardy, they were too much exhausted by the expenses of the Bernardin to undertake it. After some negotiation, the Grisons gave permission to the Austrians to complete it themselves; and this

canton now enjoys the advantages of two great roads across the Alps.*

It was not in making a road over the highest part of the mountain that the chief difficulty lay, but in constructing a safe passage along the sides of the gulf of the Verlohren loch, and through the ravine of the Roffa. This, however, has been accomplished, and the route of the Bernardin is complete. It commences at Coire, the capital of the Grisons. This city is finely situated in the valley of the Rhine, on the Plessour, about half a league from its confluence with the Rhine. The approach to the city, by the road from the canton of St. Gall, is beautiful: it is seen backed by the mountains which bound the pass to the Oberhalbstein; and up the valley of the Rhine, the view extends to beyond Ems, and closes with the mountains in which the Rhine has its sources.†

There is nothing remarkable between Coire and Richenau. At this place the Vorder-Rhin and the Hinter-Rhin unite, and a single arch is thrown across the river, 237 English feet span, and rising in the centre 80 feet above the river: it is covered, and built entirely of wood, and is one of the most celebrated of this class of structures now existing. From the gardens of the Château of Richenau, to which visitors at the inn have ready access, the scene of the confluence of the two rivers is not uninteresting. After crossing the Vorder-Rhin by another covered bridge, the road ascends on the left bank of the Hinter-Rhin; and soon after passing the old castle of Retzuns, which is in a romantic situation,

* The Grisons appreciate so highly these advantages, that they have begun to render the passes of the Julier and the Maloja traversable for carriages, by a road which will lead from Coire through the Oberhalbstein, the Engadine, and the Val Bregaglia, to Chiavenna and the Lake of Como. Ten carriage-roads are now completed across the Alps, and others are in the course of formation; and over those barriers which were formerly considered impassable without danger, are now formed some of the best roads in the world. The Alps are unchanged; but man, by rising above his prejudices, has risen superior to their obstructions.

† Plate the First.

enters the beautiful valley of Domleschg. This valley is surrounded by lofty mountains, and speckled with the ruins of old castles. An excellent road, upon which a succession of fine views is presented, extends through the valley to Tüsis, which is situated at its southern extremity, and close to the Verlohren loch, the entrance to the Via Mala, one of the most striking points of the new road. The path which at a very remote period, led from Tüsis to the Splügen, lay over the mountain of the Piz Beverin, and avoiding the gorge of the Via Mala, descended upon Suvers, in the Rhinwald; and it was the only pass for mules prior to 1470. At this period, the people of Tüsis opened a shorter communication by the village of Rongella, which, passing over the Mont Crapteig, between the entrance to the defile and the old road by the Piz Beverin, descended, by a difficult path, 618 feet into the gulf of the Via Mala, whence the path, hollowed out on the eastern side of the ravine, continued through the gorge to the valley of Schams. This road was improved in 1738, by changing part of its course to the other side of the ravine, and building two bridges, which were boldly thrown across this fearful passage.*

When the establishment of a carriage-road by the Bernardin was decided upon, Pocobelli, the engineer, directed his attention particularly to the entrance of the Verlohren loch on the side of Tüsis, and determined to carry the road through the tremendous obstacles which opposed him there. It would not only, he considered, be shorter, but less expensive, to do this, than to improve the road by Rongella. The success of his enterprise was complete: a well-made road is now extended across the Nolla by a new bridge; thence it is carried round the eastern side of the ravine; and where the

* It would seem that the name of the Verlohren loch was formerly applied to the whole length of the ravine; but after the construction of the road in 1470, that portion through which it passed bore the appropriate name of the Via Mala, and the impassable part only retained the name, which it still bears.

projecting and perpendicular rock overhung the torrent in the gulf, 300 feet, a gallery has been cut through it, 216 feet long, 14 feet high, and 18 feet wide. The scene immediately around this spot is exceeding grand; the rocks towering to a great height above the road, and overhanging a vast depth beneath it, appal, by the difficulty of estimating either, by the eye, on account of their proximity. The width of the gulf nowhere exceeds 150 feet. From the southern end of the gallery,* the perpendicular face of the Johannsenstein, surmounted by the ruins of the castle of Rhaalta,† the oldest in the Grisons, rises above the bed of the Rhine 640 feet. Some pines jut out of the rock in this gorge, and flourish where it is difficult to conceive that the roots can either attach themselves or derive nourishment.‡

There are few places more wild and romantic than the Via Mala, where a deep ravine is formed by the bases of mountains, rising 6000, and even 8000 feet above the torrent of the Hinter-Rhin, which separates them.§ The entire length of the defile is nearly four miles, and it terminates at its southern extremity in the valley of Schams. The repose and security of this valley, suddenly contrasted with the Via Mala,

* Title Vignette.

† The name of this castle is said to be derived from Rhatius, a chief of the Tuscans, who were driven from Italy by the Gauls 587 years before the Christian era. Six centuries of obscurity intervened before the conquest of this country by the Romans. In the 5th century it fell into the hands of the Allemanni. Shortly afterwards it was obtained by the Goths; and in 540 possessed by the Franks: it was inhabited by one named Victor in 600. The ruins of the church of Saint John, which was built at the period when Christianity was introduced into the Grisons, are close to the ruins of the castle. The view from the summit over the vale of Domleschg is strikingly beautiful.

‡ Whilst the road was in progress, the pines on the western side took fire from some unknown cause, and burned so fiercely, that the ravine was, from the excessive heat, impassable for several days. The scathed trunks of many of the trees still mark the spot.

§ In many places, where the road is carried 300 or 400 feet above the river, the sides of the ravine are not 50 feet apart. Such spots have been chosen for the construction of bridges, which it requires a firm head to look over steadily. The struggles of the torrent from that depth reach the ear only in murmurs; and when seen amidst the deep and dark abyss, its white foam appears to go up the ravine, from the eddy which its violence produces.

give to it a character of beauty which it does not inherently possess. About a league from the Via Mala, the following inscription, on a bridge, close to the baths of Pignou, records the completion of the new route:—

JAM VIA PATET
HOSTIBUS ET AMICIS.
CAVETE RHAETI!
SIMPLICITAS MORUM
ET UNIO
SERVABUNT AVITAM
LIBERTATEM.

Beneath the inscription is the symbol of William Tell—an apple pierced by an arrow. The baths are very near to the village of Andeer, where the post-house affords excellent accommodation.

A little way above Andeer, the road makes a zig-zag ascent into the defile of Rofla, through which the Rhine thunders amidst the rocks which check its rapid descent, and falls in two magnificent cataracts. The Rofla is extremely savage and dreary: rocks are strewn in the valley, and the pines which they have brought down, and crushed in their fall, increase the air of desolation, which the ruins of the castle of Bärenburg contribute to heighten. Many saw-mills are established in the Rofla for cutting into planks the pines which are felled in the mountains of the Rhinwald, and in which an extensive commerce is carried on with Milan by the Splugen. Close to a large establishment of saw-mills, a slide, similar to that of Alpnach, is constructed; but its length is not above two miles: it is employed to bring down the trees from the higher forests: the time chosen for discharging them is during rain, when they glide more easily.

Near the termination of the defile of the Rofla, the traveller passes through a gallery cut in the rock, and enters the valley of the Rhinwald. Soon after, the village of Splugen opens upon him, in a situation surrounded by lofty mountains, and the distance bounded by the glaciers of the Hinter-Rhin.

Splügen is the chief place in the valley: its situation, at the foot of the pass of Mont Splügen, is important, as it is the station of agents who expedite merchandise to and from the mountain. Before this road was made passable for carriages by the Austrians, some hundreds of horses and mules were kept here for the transport of goods; and though greater facilities are afforded by the use of wagons, as a *dépôt* it has not lost much of its importance. The new route of the Bernardin passes through the village of Splügen, and continues up the valley. The road to the Splügen abruptly leaves the village by a covered bridge across the Rhine,* and ascends the mountain directly from the river. We shall describe this route in a subsequent page. The valley of the Rhinwald has a great elevation. The village of Splügen is 5000 English feet above the level of the sea; and the winters there are so long, that they have proverbially nine months' winter, and three months' cold: yet flax is grown there, and peas and barley ripen. The bottom of the valley is generally free from wood; but the mountain-sides are richly clothed in forests of pine and larch.

From Splügen to the village of Hinter-Rhin the distance is about two leagues. The ascent by the Rhinwald is gradual; but at this height small differences of elevation are sensibly marked in the vegetable productions. Hinter-Rhin is only about 170 feet above the level of Splügen; yet barley seldom ripens there. A convenient inn offers accommodation to the traveller who may be detained by tempestuous weather at the foot of the Bernardin.† After crossing the stony bed of the Rhine, over a new bridge, the road directly ascends by a long succession of zig-zag turns

* End Vignette.

† The author, who left Coire in the afternoon, instead of proceeding to Bernardin to sleep, stayed in the house of the Landammann, at Nardimen, a village between Splügen and Hinter-Rhin, where he was received with great civility, and well accommodated. The Landammann was a rich proprietor in the forest of the Rhinwald. Not a member of his large family of sons and daughters was under six feet in height: himself and his wife were worthy progenitors of such a race of giants.

up the side of the Bernardin. From Hinter-Rhin, and during the early part of the ascent, the great glacier is seen, at the head of the valley, which is the southern source of the Rhine. Soon after, as the traveller proceeds between the Moschel and the Schwarzhorn, the only object presented to him, on looking back, is the village of Hinter-Rhin lying far below him, a mere speck in its dreary and sterile site, bounded on the north by the Walserberg, and the range of mountains which separate the Savien-thal from the Rhinwald. The summit of the Bernardin is 7090 English feet above the level of the sea, and is very dreary. The little plain on the Col is chiefly occupied by the Lake of the Moesa,* the source of the river, which, descending through the Val Misocco, falls into the Tessin, near Bellinzona. An inn is established on the summit of the passage; which must in winter be a wretched habitation; but it is necessary, as a place of refuge in bad weather, particularly since the establishment of a regular diligence from Bellinzona to Coire.†

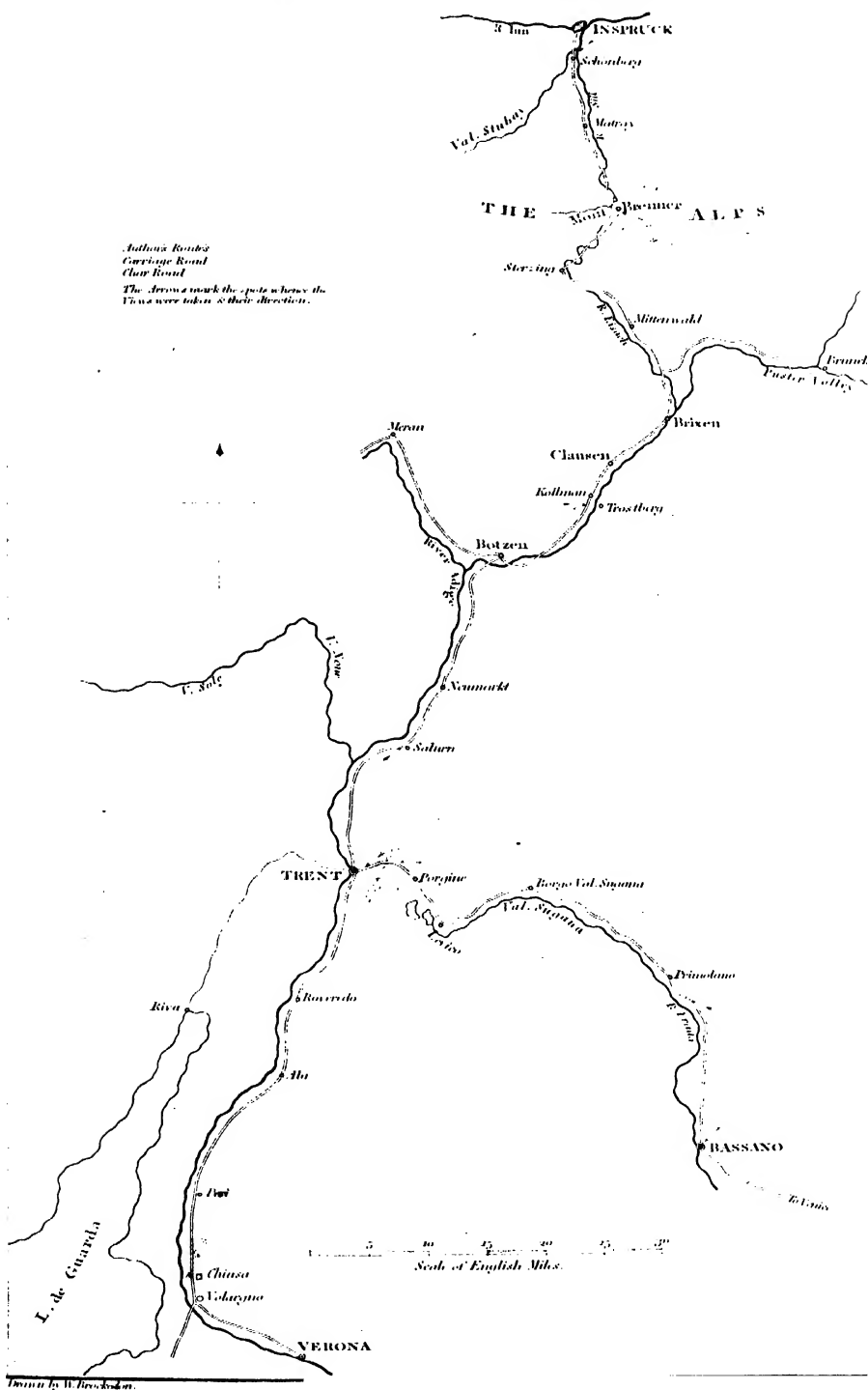
The descent from the summit of the passage to the village of Bernardin, on the southern side, is about a league, by a rapid succession of zigzags. A fine bridge is passed, which is called, in compliment to the King of Sardinia, the bridge of Victor Emanuel: the torrent is nearly 120 feet beneath it. The village of Bernardin is 5500 English feet above the level of the sea.‡ After leaving the little plain of the Bernardin, another succession of tourniquets, or zigzags, bears the traveller

* Plate the Second.

† During the winter, the conveyance is by sledges. High poles are fixed along the sides of the route, to mark its direction above the snow, which, at that season, is generally 12 or 14 feet, sometimes 18 feet, and in the drifts 30 feet deep; yet this is considered the least dangerous of the passes of the Grisons. In the month of March, 1824, an avalanche fell on the side of the mountain towards Hinter-Rhin, swept across the road, and killed two of a party of travellers by diligence, who were walking up the mountain: one of these was the chief magistrate of Roveredo, in the Val Misocco.

‡ The village is remarkable for a mineral spring, which, from the facilities now afforded, by the new road, to its easy access, will probably be much frequented. Two new inns, and other accommodations for visitors, are established there: in 1826 nearly 100 persons visited these springs.

PASSES OF THE ALPS.



MAP to ILLUSTRATE THE PASSES of the BRENNER AND THE MONTE PORGINE.

ROUTE

FROM

SPLUGEN TO THE LAKE OF COMO,

BY

THE PASS OF THE SPLUGEN.

AFTER crossing the Hinter-Rhin at the village of Splugen, the road ascends directly from the river, and attains, by a succession of zigzags, the greatest elevation, which is 6500 English feet above the level of the sea. Unlike the col of the Bernardin, the summit of the Splugen is a narrow crest, whence the road rapidly descends, above 700 feet, to the establishment of the Austrian douane, situated in a sheltered plain, which bears the appearance of having formerly been a lake. Here, also, is an inn, serving as an hospice, where a bell is rung, during *tourmentes*, to direct any traveller within hearing to its refuge.

At the Austro-Lombard custom-house, a crowd of ill-paid officials are always ready to increase their pittance by pouncing upon any unfortunate wight who happens to pass that way. A bribe with an Austrian douanier is always a matter of course, and usually solicited. In the summer there is generally much bustle and business going forward at this establishment, where the number of travellers, and busy scenes of the custom-house, are sufficient to destroy the air of solitude that must otherwise reign in a spot so wild and sequestered, surrounded by mountains, which, covered with snow, and clothed in

glaciers, rise 4000 and 5000 feet above the plain. Immense flocks of sheep are pastured in these Alps in the summer, by Bergamasque shepherds.

The descent on the side of Italy soon changes the character of the scene, where the difficulties encountered by the boldness and skill of the engineer become sources of admiration. Numerous covered ways, of strong masonry, are constructed, to guard against avalanches; and the line of road, from some points of view, presents an extraordinary appearance, particularly near the *Casa di Recovero* of Tagiate, whence the road is seen winding on the mountain-side in a long serpentine track, which appears to return upon the observer, and is then, for some distance, lost in the valley of Isola; it reappears, however, and is seen again in some parts of its course through the valley of St. Giacomo, and may be traced far in the depth and distance of Campo Dolcino.* At the bottom of the chief descent, where the traveller attains the banks of the Lira, in the valley of St. Giacomo, the road turns abruptly down the valley, instead of continuing to the village of Isola, which is at a very short distance. This village was formerly the station of the muleteers who used to cross the Splugen by the old and dangerous pass of the Cardinells: a road which is now entirely avoided. In the ravine of the upper valley of St. Giacomo, through which the route passes, there is one scene of great beauty, where the torrent of the Pianazza, falling into the Lira, forms a cataract: seen from the ravine, its upper part intercepts the sky, from which it appears to be continually pouring.

The defile terminates in the little plain of the Campo Dolcino. This name must have been given to it by travellers who have descended from the snows and dangers of the Splugen: there is nothing in the scene itself deserving the appellation. Below this plain the road descends rapidly by

tourniquets through a narrow, rocky, and sterile valley, which, however, contains many villages. The lofty towers of St. Maria and St. Giacomo indicate the Italian side of the mountain, and aid the effect of brightening skies and luxuriant vegetation, in impressing the traveller with the pleasurable emotion of his being about to enter Italy. Chiavenna is at a very short distance from St. Giacomo: the approach to it is fine. Beyond the town, the Val Bregalia is seen skirted by the great range of mountains that form its southern boundary, and which are surmounted by enormous glaciers, extending to the Bernina, in the Engadine. From Chiavenna, the distance to Riva, at the head of the Lake of Como, is about ten miles. Travellers hasten through the northern parts of the lake, to avoid the malaria, which prevails there to a fatal extent. Boats are readily obtained at Riva, by which they can descend to the Lake of Como. The navigation of the Lake of Riva, the northern part of the Lake of Como, is dangerous, owing to shallows, which prevent the steam-boats proceeding above Gravedona; at which place, however, they daily arrive from, and return to, Como.

A route by the Alps, from Cisalpine Gaul into Rætia and Suabia, is one of the four passes of the Alps stated by Polybius as known to the Romans in his time. That some pass across these Alps is of such high antiquity is unquestionable; but it is not possible to determine whether the pass known so early was that of the Bernardin or of the Splügen by the Rhinwald of the Septimer, from Chiavenna by the Val Bregalia to Coire; or of the Lukmanier, from the Val Levantine to the Val Medels and the Vorder-Rhin, as all these lead into the Grisons—modern Rætia. It is certain, however, that the pass of the Splügen was one of the most frequented in 1473, and a part of this pass was used in the twelfth century, when, instead of descending to the village of Splügen, it turned off on the left from the summit of the Splügen, and led to Nau-fanen, in the Rhinwald; thence, crossing the Lockliberg to the

PASSES OF THE ALPS.

Savien-thal, was continued to Ilanz, in the Vorder-Rhin. The passes into the Grisons are often mentioned in the eventful history of the campaigns of Napoleon. In 1799, the French army under General Lecourbe passed by the Bernardin into the Grisons ; but his exploits are forgotten, in comparison with the passage of the Splugen by the second army of reserve under Macdonald, in November and December 1800, which has been related by General Count Philip de Segur, and in which the difficulties, the dangers, and the losses of the army, from every evil with which they could be assailed during an Alpine passage in the winter, are described with great power, and appear to exceed every previous record of the efforts and the endurance of man.

ROUTE

FROM

INSBRUCK TO VERONA,

BY

THE PASS OF THE BRENNER.

THE road which leads from Germany into Italy, by the Pass of the Brenner, is the lowest across the great chain of the Alps, having an elevation of only 4700 feet above the level of the sea.* Before the formation of the route of the Tende, it was the only pass by which travellers could cross the Alps without dismounting from their carriages. The route lies directly through the Tyrol, from Inspruck to Verona; ascending on the northern side, the course of the Sill to the Brenner, and following the Eisach in its descent, on the southern side, until it joins the Adige at Botzen, and thence by Trent and Roveredo to the plains of Lombardy.

The importance of a free communication between Austria and its Cisalpine states led to the construction of a good road by the Brenner at, probably, an early period of the possession by Austria of territories in Lombardy; and the intercourse by this pass is still very great, though the new routes of the Bernardin, the Splugen, and the Stelvio, offer to the western states of Germany a more direct communication with the Milanese.

* Page 5, line 2, of the Pass of the Mont Genève, the Brenner ought to have been excepted.*

Innsbruck, the chief city of the Tyrol, is situated in the valley of the Inn, nearly midway between the source of this river and its confluence with the Danube.* It was known to the Romans as *Enipontum*, but not as the capital of the Tyrol: this distinction was held by Meran until the thirteenth century, when certain immunities which were granted to Innsbruck gave it peculiar advantages, and the rank which it has since held. Innsbruck lies in a little plain, bounded on the northern side by lofty mountains, which divide the Tyrol from Bavaria, and rise abruptly above the Inn to the height of 7000 feet. On the southern side of the plain lies the Abbey of Wiltau, at the foot of the route which leads to Italy by the Brenner. The road rises immediately beyond the Abbey, and on looking down the valley of the Inn from the ascent, a fine view is presented, including Innsbruck, the town of Hall, and the valley beyond; but this prospect is soon shut out from the observer as he continues his route up the western side of the valley, through which the Sill flows, a river which has its source in the Brenner. Its deep winding course is seen far beneath the road.

About seven miles from Innsbruck is the village of Unter-Schönberg, where the Rutzbäch, which descends through the valley of Stubay, falls into the Sill. The stream is crossed, and the road winds up the side of the Schönberg. Near the post-house on this mountain, one of the finest scenes in the Tyrol may be enjoyed, where the deep valley of Stubay lies below, with its dark pine forests sweeping down to the torrent, and the distance bounded by the immense glaciers and peaked summits of the Stubay.†

From Schönberg the road ascends the valley called the Wipp-thal, by the torrent of the Sill; and after passing

* The waters of the Inn are greater than those of the Danube at their confluence; and the loss of its name in the Danube is an undeserved dishonour.

† Plate the First. The inhabitants of this retired and beautiful valley are known in the German States as the best makers of swords, edge-tools, and other cutlery.

through the little market-town of Matray* and the villages of Steinach and Gries, the traveller attains the summit of the pass a little beyond the Brenner Lake,† at the village of St. Valentin. The post-house‡ is situated on the crest of the passage, which is bounded by lofty mountains. Immediately behind the post-house a fine cascade descends, and the actual summit of the pass is singularly marked by the division of a stream which, dashing on a rock, is separated, one part flowing into the Eisach, the Adige, and the Adriatic ; the other reaching the Black Sea; by the Sill, the Inn, and the Danube.

From the summit of the passage, the road, for about a mile, declines very little: afterwards it rapidly descends, on the banks of the Eisach, through a ravine, into which numerous tributary streams flow, and the Eisach soon becomes a brawling and violent torrent. At Sterzing§ the country opens, and the products of the soil already mark the southern side of the Alps.

* Anciently the city of Matreium, destroyed by the Bavarians in the ninth century.

† This little lake, whence the Sill flows, is frozen over eight or nine months in the year; yet it is celebrated for the delicacy of the trout with which it abounds: these are kept at the inns on the Brenner in troughs, through which a stream passes, and form a never-failing dish at the traveller's repast.

‡ Plate the Second.

§ When the author first visited the Tyrol, in the year 1822, he witnessed a curious scene at Sterzing. While waiting at the inn, the sound of drum and fife, and a bustle in the street, announced a procession of the successful marksman of the day. The Tyrolese practise, every Sunday afternoon, and all holy-days, the use of the rifle; and there are few houses in the Tyrol which are not ornamented with targets, the trophies of success, which are suspended beneath the overhanging roofs, in front of the residences of the victors. The target of the day is the prize of the best shot; and that which was won at Sterzing was borne through the street on the back of a friend of the winner, preceded by a drum and fife, and followed by the successful marksman, who, dressed out with flowers and ribands as fantastically as a May-day sweep in England, expressed his joy by dancing and pirouetting amidst his friends, who congratulated and cheered him. What degree of skill the constant use of the rifle has given to the Tyrolese may be inferred from the following fact: One of those who had been unsuccessful in the contest on that day was overtaken by the author's party near Sterzing, and offered a ride on his way home, which he accepted; he complained bitterly of his ill-luck, and attributed his failure to the weather, which had been hazy; but to shew that he had some claim to distinction as a marksman, he pointed out a young tree on the side of the road, at a considerable distance, levelled his rifle at it, and drove a ball through the trunk, though he fired from the char in which he was riding.

Soon after leaving Sterzing the road passes the ruins of an old castle, and enters a narrow valley, deep and darkened by pines, which clothe the abrupt mountain-sides; and this character of scenery continues, without much variation, to Mittenwald. Every step of this passage was disputed by the Tyrolese in their fearful and unequal contest with the French and Bavarians in the year 1809; but a spot, about two miles below the post-house of Mittenwald, is pointed out to the traveller as the scene of a *ruse de guerre* of the famous Andrew Hofer, when he attacked the Bavarians from an ambuscade. The spot is not such as a stranger would at first suppose was well chosen for the fearful purpose for which it was selected,—the mind would picture to itself a situation overhung with precipices,—but here the narrow valley suddenly spreads out on the left of the river into a little plain, about a quarter of a mile broad and half a mile long, around which the mountain base sweeps like an amphitheatre. A little church, and a village through which the road passes, occupy the left bank of the Eisach. On the right, the mountain rises abruptly from the bed of the river. This was the spot chosen by Hofer for the ambuscade of the Tyrolese: he had caused to be prepared rocks, trunks of trees, and other heavy bodies, on the rise of the mountains above the plain, which were so placed, that when the props were withdrawn which supported them, these masses rolled down the declivity and across the plain, overwhelming and destroying everything in their way. The French and Bavarians, who had entered the Tyrol to suppress the insurrection, proceeded in pursuit of a small party, who retreated step by step, fighting as they fell back, into the passes of the Brenner and the forests of Mittenwald. Circumstances had excited in the invading army some fears of an ambuscade; these had been reported to the Duke of Dantzic, who commanded the troops, but he ordered the pursuit to continue, though he prudently retreated to a place

of security. About 4000 Bavarians, who had been ordered to advance, having entered the fatal spot, a cry was suddenly heard in the mountain,—“Hans, in the name of the Holy Trinity, cut all loose!” In less than a minute, thousands were crushed by the falling masses; the remainder, in their terror, attempted to retreat, but the unerring balls of the Tyrolese increased the numbers of the slain. Observing the effect of their *ruse* upon the terrified enemy, the Tyrolese descended from their fastnesses—even young boys and girls joined in the attack—and, rushing upon their invaders, thousands of the Bavarians and French were killed. They retreated about fifteen miles before they could be rallied; but so great was their terror, that when Hofer again appeared, they fled before the Tyrolese, who fell with redoubled fury upon their invaders, and completed the victory.

From Mittenwald to Brixen, almost every mile was the site of a battle during the eventful defence of the Tyrol in 1809; every defile, every bridge, was contested; and the scenery, which is strikingly fine from many points of view, excites other emotions, from its association with the events of that year, than those which nature, in her magnificence or her beauty, would produce.

Before arriving at Brixen, the traveller leaves on his left the pass of Mühlbach,—the entrance to the Fuster-thal, whence the torrent of the Rients issues, which falls at Brixen into the Eisach. Brixen is an ancient town, situated at the extremity of a little plain: it retains the name of the Brixentes, a people conquered by the Romans in the time of Augustus: their name is preserved by Pliny, who has recorded the inscription which formerly existed upon the trophy of Augustus, where, among other Alpine nations, this is mentioned as having been subdued by him.

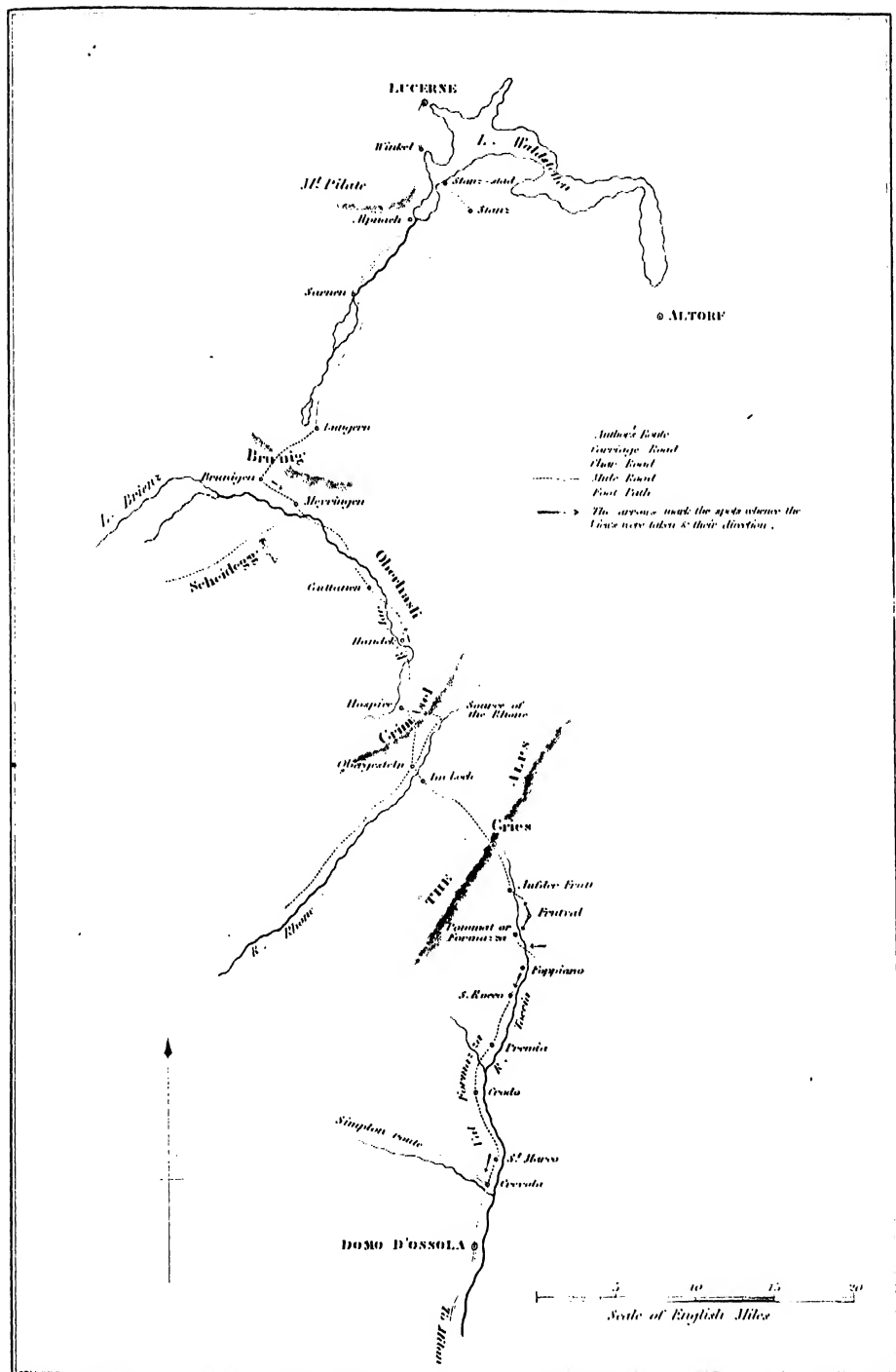
The next town in the descent from Brixen is Clausen; its appearance is very striking: on the right the convent of Saben is seen on a lofty rock which overhangs the town;

and an enormous crucifix, painted on the gable end of the church, appears to be 80 or 100 feet in height. This convent is built on the ruins of the ancient palace of the bishops of Brixen, who resided here prior to the twelfth century : it is considered the site of the ancient city of Sabiona, which was destroyed by Attila. The road now descends through a valley, which widens into a productive plain, extending to the village of Kollman, the next post station. Nearly opposite to this place is the castle of Trostberg, one of those structures which abound in the Tyrol, and mark its ancient feudal character. The situation of Trostberg is very fine, on a rock separated by a ravine from the side of the mountain, but which is connected with it by a part of the building. It stands on a commanding and beautiful spot, whence vineyards sweep down the side of the hill to the banks of the Eisach, which flows in a torrent at its base.*

From Kollman the scenery is almost unvarying to Botzen. The valley is narrow, sometimes scarcely allowing space for the road, and the river which foams amidst the blocks of granite that have fallen into its bed from the neighbouring heights. Generally, the sides of the mountains are richly clothed with forest-trees, which descend to the banks of the torrent : in some places the rocks fearfully overhang the path of the traveller ; but the route, though wild and savage, is relieved from dreariness by the occasional appearance of villages, where vines are trellised, and walnut-trees grow luxuriantly.

Botzen is finely situated on the confluence of the Talfer and the Eisach, and at a short distance only from the confluence of these with the Adige. The meeting of the valleys through which these rivers flow has produced a plain in which Botzen stands : though it has an elevation of 1300 feet, and amidst the Alps, it is so sheltered that the

PASSES OF THE ALPS



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MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE ROUTE FROM LUCERNE TO DOMO D'OSSOLA BY THE GRIMSEL AND GRIES.

fruits of Lombardy are abundant here. It is one of the chief places in the Tyrol; and its situation is so favourable to commerce as to enrich its inhabitants, who have many villas in the neighbourhood, which may boast of remarkably beautiful sites. There are many objects of interest in the vicinity of Botzen, particularly to the geologist. One of the most remarkable of these is the pyramids of Ritter, near Ober-Botzen, a village of about two hours north of Botzen. These pyramids vary in height from thirty to sixty feet; they are very numerous, and present in some places, amidst trees, the appearance of the ruins of temples. Their formation is remarkable; they are composed of sandstone, which the rains have disintegrated, except where large stones have preserved the masses upon which they lay, from the action of the rain. These pyramids are covered by the stones which have occasioned their formation—surmounting them like the capitals of columns.

Below Botzen, the ruins of several castles, in the valley of the Adige, are striking features in the scenery, which is often beautiful between Botzen and Newmarkt: at Salurn, a little below Newmarkt, one of these castles is remarkable for its situation on the pinnacle of a rock.*

A few miles down the valley from Salurn is the little town of St. Michael, situated opposite the entrance to the Val de Non, on the confluence of the Nos, which flows from this valley, with the Adige. The valleys of the Non and the Sole were the territory of the Naunes, mentioned upon the trophy of Augustus as one of the Alpine nations subdued by that emperor. The Val de Non abounds with beautiful situations, castles, villages, and hamlets, and the wealthy inhabitants of Trent spend some part of the summer in this delightful valley, esteemed by them the most beautiful in the Italian Tyrol. The Val de Sole is the upper part of the Val de

* End Vignette.

Non, and rises to the glaciers of the Ortler-Spitz, the Gavio, and the Tonai. Across the latter of these a difficult path leads to Edolo, in the Val Camonica.

Between St. Michael and Lavis the valley of the Adige narrows to a defile, but spreading out again, extends into the beautiful plain of Trent. The city of Trent has been rendered remarkable in history, chiefly by the celebrated Council of the Church, which was held there from the year 1545 to 1563. The church of St. Mary Maggiore, in which the council was held, is usually visited by strangers. Trent is a city of high antiquity, and boasts of a foundation by the Etruscans, prior to Rome: it was known as Tridentum. It was conquered and strongly fortified by the Cenomanni, and afterwards fell, with Rætia, into the hands of the Romans. As it lay in the course of the northern invaders of Italy, it fell successively into the possession of the Huns, the Goths, the Lombards, and the Franks. In later times it occasionally possessed independence, when not in the hands of the Bavarians or the Austrians. On a hill called Dostrent, anciently Dorsum Tridentum, west of the city, there formerly stood a temple of Neptune, and the ruins of a castle built by the Lombards still remain. Southward of Trent, the German language gives place to the Italian, which is generally spoken. Surrounded by lofty mountains, the situation of Trent is very beautiful: the Adige traverses the plain immediately above it, and waters the walls of the city. In almost every point of view Trent is picturesque; but from no place is it more striking than from the ascent to Monte Porgine, where the city, and the windings of the river, are seen beneath the observer, with the mountains which bound the plain, extending to the horizon, and closing, in the distance, the valley of the Adige.* From Trent a road leads to Arco and thence to Riva, at the head of the Lago di Garda. Between Trent and

* Plate the Fourth.

Roveredo, among many other beautiful scenes, there is one of the château of St. Pietro, where the steep banks and windings of the Adige are particularly striking; but many fine views are shut out from the traveller in this part of the route by lofty walls, between which the road passes: these walls are raised to protect the vineyards. At Roveredo, numerous silk-mills give a commercial and industrious character to the inhabitants. The largest inn, the Rose, is disgustingly dirty; and the traveller is already made to feel sensibly the difference between the cleanness of the German inns and the dirt and discomfort of those of Lombardy. From Roveredo, as well as from Trent, a road leads to Riva, on the Lago di Guarda. This is a shorter and more beautiful passage to the Milanese than by Volargno and Castel-nuovo.

Between Roveredo and Ala, the next post-town, where the road is not enclosed by walls which exclude all view of the country, it passes through scenes extremely savage and dreary, occasioned by a fall of the Monte Marco, which has strewn the valley with enormous rocks and stones, particularly near the village of Steravale, which probably derives its name from the desolate character of the surrounding scene. It seems to be a spot well adapted for violence, and it has the reputation of having been formerly infested by brigands. From Ala to the next post station, Peri,* the road is without any interest, and it is almost unvarying to Chiusa, though the appearance of this valley to a traveller from the plains of Lombardy is refreshing and beautiful, after the tedium of journeying over extensive flats, with the prospect limited to a few yards of dead walls or vineyards, bounded by mulberry-trees, which, stript of their leaves for the silk-worms, appear to be decaying in the midst of fertility.

* At the inn at Peri, where the author rested to take refreshment, the extortion practised by the host, or rather hostess, exceeded anything of the kind to which he had ever been subjected: each article was extravagantly charged in detail; and one item was, a franc and a half for a bed, upon the end of which the author had incautiously sat for a minute.

The pass of Chiusa is a remarkable, but unpicturesque defile, through which the Adige has forced its way, leaving no space for a road but what has been artificially obtained, where the rock has been cut away and overhangs the passage. Here there was formerly a fort, which defended the frontiers of the Venetian territories: it has now been dismantled. After passing a short way beneath lofty and perpendicular rocks, the traveller leaves all semblance of hills, and proceeds, through Volargno and the plains of Lombardy to Verona.

To those whose object it is to visit Venice by the Tyrol, a road from Trent, shorter by thirty miles, offers itself by the Monte Porgine and the valley of the Brenta. The general beauty of this route, and the wildness of some parts of it, are superior to the scenery presented upon the road by Roveredo and Verona. The ascent to the Monte Porgine abruptly commences from the eastern side of Trent, and nothing can exceed the succession of beautiful prospects presented on the road up the mountain. Trent is generally an object in these views, and it is seen in the distance, even from the summit of this pass, far beyond the deep defile that lies beneath the road, through which a torrent descends that falls into the Adige, near Trent.* After crossing the ridge, the road winds down to a rich valley, in which the pleasant village of Porgine is situated: shortly afterwards, the route skirts the sequestered lakes of Caldonazzo and Levico, which are formed by the Brenta, and passes on, through a valley singularly wild and beautiful, to Borgo-Val Sugana, where an excellent inn, the Aquila d'Oro, offers its welcome. Numerous old castles enrich the scenery of the Val Sugana, particularly the castle of Borgo, which is seen from far down the valley. These feudal structures distinguish the Tyrol from Lombardy, and are scarcely observed beyond the frontier: the road lies through many villages, the largest of which is

* Plate the Fifth.

Grigno, where passports are examined. The Tyrol is left at Lazaretto. Richly wooded dells and vast overhanging rocks continually recur in this valley. Its inhabitants are a remarkably fine race of people: their costume is simple, and their mode of dressing their hair with natural flowers is very elegant. They are supposed to be descendants of the Cimbri, who, it has been conjectured, took refuge in these valleys after their defeat by Marius. Many Teutonic words, derived from the allies of the Cimbri, are certainly found in the *patois* of the Val Sugana.*

Soon after leaving the frontier of the Tyrol, the traveller reaches Primolano. Between that town and Cismone the road passes, for about a league, through a defile of the most magnificent character: the rocks, towering to a vast height, in some places entirely overhang the road, and excite the most fearful emotions in those who pass beneath them, on the brink of precipices which overhang the torrent that foams beneath the road. At one of the abrupt turns in this defile, in the face of the mountain which commands the approach up the ravine, a gallery is cut out of the solid rock, and a battery constructed there, about 100 feet above the road. To this singular place there did not appear to be any access. On

* The Val Sugana was the scene of some of Napoleon's most astonishing exploits in the campaign of 1796, when he was engaged against the imperial army under General Wurmser. After the celebrated battles of Lonato and Castiglione, Wurmser had retreated upon Trent; and having been joined by 20,000 fresh troops, he committed the fatal error of dividing his army. Marching at the head of 30,000 men across the Monte Porgine and through the defiles of the Brenta, he proceeded, with some ulterior object in view, to Bassano, having left 20,000 men, under Davidowich, at Roveredo, to guard the Tyrol. Napoleon availed himself of this error to throw his army upon Roveredo with incredible velocity, forced the strongly entrenched camp of the enemy, and obtained a complete victory, in spite of the obstinate valour of the Austrians. The shattered remains of their army fell back upon the defile of Lavis, where they were again defeated: then hastily crossing the Monte Porgine, Buonaparte accomplished a march of sixty miles in two days, and fell upon the advanced guard of the Austrians at Primolano, halted for the night at Cismone, and thence pursuing his success, reached Bassano the next day, and attacked the chief division, commanded by Wurmser himself, which he destroyed. This battle was fought on the 8th of September, four days only after the battle of Roveredo.

the summit of this overhanging cliff the shouts of a shepherd were heard ; but it was some time before he could be distinguished, and then he appeared a mere speck against the sky. There was no part of this extraordinary defile to which a sketch could do justice : that which is introduced* is taken, on looking back towards Primolano, from its entrance.

Where the defile widens again into a valley, the winter bed of the torrent is covered with rocks and stones. At Cismone,† the torrent of the Vanoi flows into the Brenta, and increases, below the confluence, the desolate appearance of the bed of the river, by the share of the mountain *débris* which its violence brings down in the winter. The aspect for a few miles is extremely dreary, where rocks of immense height bound the right bank of the torrent. The savage character of the valley changes only on arriving in sight of the beautiful town of Vastagno, situated on the right bank of the Brenta : it is celebrated for its opulence, which is derived from silk-works. The road passes through Carpenedo, a village opposite to Vastagno. Below this place the course of the Brenta is less violent ; the road declines more gradually, and the traveller leaves the Alps and enters upon the rich plain of the Vicentine. Nothing can exceed its luxuriant vegetation ; the flatness of the plain, however, prevents any object being seen beyond the vines, until a sudden turn in the road presents Bassano stretching out on a rising ground over the rich plain, where two or three knolls rise and break the extensive flat, which in the distance, on the right, is bounded by the lowest ranges of the Trentine Alps.‡ From Bassano, the distance to Venice, by Treviso, is not quite six posts.

* Title Vignette.

† A long wooden bridge crosses the Vanoi, and the tariff of tolls, paid on passing it, bears date above one hundred years since.

‡ Plate the Sixth.

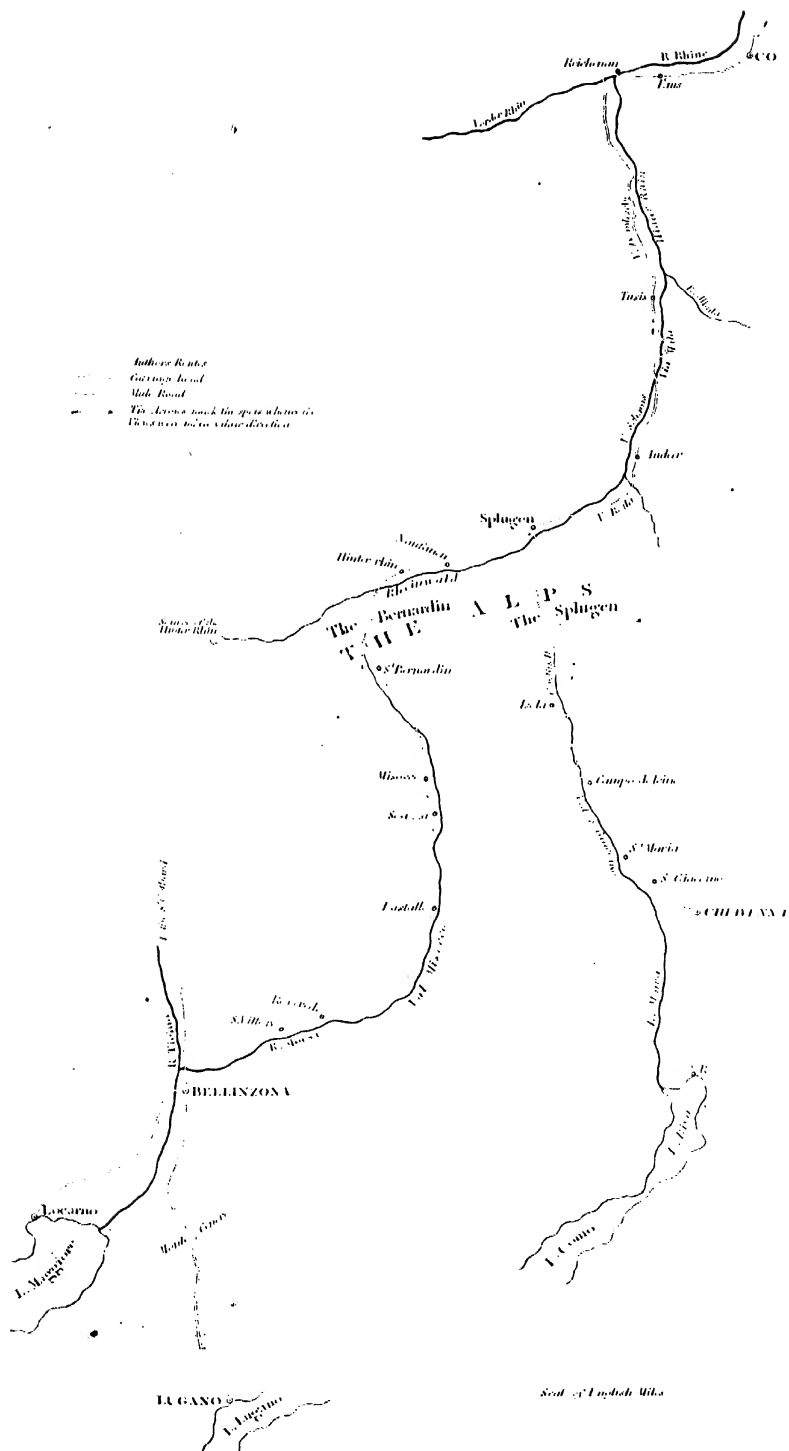
The earliest mention of the pass of the Brenner* is about thirteen years before Christ, when the Romans, under Augustus, extended their conquests beyond the Rhetian and the Noric Alps, and subdued and civilised the people who inhabited the Tyrol. Tranquillity for some time succeeded their conquest, until they were disturbed by the Markomanni, a people of the north of Europe, who invaded Italy by crossing the Brenner into the southern Tyrol, and struggled twelve years with the Roman power before they were finally expelled. Early in the third century, the Allemanni and the Goths penetrated also by the Tyrol into Italy, but without establishing themselves at that time, as their retreat was purchased by the already degenerate Romans; but in the fourth century they again broke over the Tyrolese Alps. In the year 452, Attila poured into Italy his hordes from the north by the Brenner, ravaged Trent and the southern Tyrol, and, overwhelming Italy, destroyed the western empire. Odoacer, in 476, invaded Italy by this pass, at the head of the Huruli and Rugii, and so completely established himself, that he was crowned king at Pavia. Thirteen years later, Theodoric entered Italy with his Ostrogoths, by the Brenner, expelled Odoacer, and founded an empire which extended from the Saint Gothard to the Black Sea. But this empire, in half a century, sunk from internal dissension; and in its Italian portion arose the kingdom of the Lombards, which included the ancient Brixentes and the Venostes, who inhabited the present Vinschgau, the Vale of Meran. During the contests between the Ostra-

* It is a conjecture resting solely upon the coincidence of names, that Brennus with the Gauls whom he commanded, descended by this pass 388 years before the Christian era. A similar reason is given for a supposition that they entered Italy by the Val Camonica, between the Valteline and the Lago d'Isco, where the name of a village is *Breno*. The pass of the Alps by which the Cimbri entered Italy is also involved in much obscurity. According to Lucius Florus, it was by the Rhetian and Tridentine Alps; but Denina, in his "Tableau Historique de la Haute-Italie," endeavours to support his conjecture that it was by the Saint Gothard.

goths and the Lombards, the northern and larger part of the Tyrol raised itself into an independent state; but this independence was only of occasional and short duration. The greater powers on the confines of the Tyrol were never scrupulous in making this unfortunate country the scene of their contests. Trent raised itself into an independent dukedom, and under Ewin nobly vindicated its integrity; for a powerful army of Franks, having passed the Grisons into the territory of Trent, plundered and outraged the inhabitants; but the Franks were routed in a pitched battle, fought at Bucholtz, near Salurn, by Ewin, in the year 577. The Tyrol suffered much during the contests of Charlemagne, with the Lombards and the Bavarians, until the former people were subdued; and an unsuccessful revolt of the latter, under Tressilo the Second, duke of Bavaria, led to the division of the country into small districts, which were governed by counts, appointed at the will of the emperor. The Tyrol shared this fate, though, after the death of Charlemagne, the Tyrolese struggled thirty years unsuccessfully to establish an independence.

After the extinction of the Carlovingian race, the Dukes of Bavaria re-established themselves, retook part of the Tyrol, and made its counts vassals, who had, during the decline of the power of the Franks, made their appointments hereditary. The dynasty of some, however, remained, and among these the Counts of Andechs distinguished themselves. The Emperor, Frederick the First, gave to one of these, Berthold the Fourth, possessions in the Tyrol which included the valleys of the Inn and the Wipp, through which the course of the present road lies from Inspruck to Brixen. Berthold resided at Meran, and assumed the title of Duke of Meran. The race of the Counts of Andechs ended with Otho the Second, in 1248. Their successors resided at the Castle of Teriolis, or Tyrol, near Meran; whence the name of the country has been derived. They were involved, in those times of lawless

PASSES OF THE ALPS



In continual disputes; and the numerous castles in the Tyrol, built in places difficult of access, yet near enough to the road to pounce upon unfortunate travellers, mark the state of society, when, like beasts of prey, each chief kept his den, at deadly feud with his neighbours. In the fourteenth century the Tyrol devolved to the Dukes of Austria, by the gift of their cousin Margaret, surnamed Maultasch, upon the death of her only son. Her second husband, the Prince of Bavaria, by whom she had this son, disputed the claims of the Duke Rodolph of Austria, and their wars made the Tyrol desolate; every place in the lower Inn-thal was burnt, except Inspruck and Hall, and a severe winter following the calamities of war, completed the misery of the Tyrolese. Rodolph bought off the claims of Bavaria, to prevent a renewal of the war.

His successor, Albert, by a wise policy, greatly relieved the Tyrolese from the effects of these dreadful scourges. Under Leopold,* his brother, the territories of the Tyrol were increased by the accession of the Val Sugana and the Vorarlberg.

In 1496, the Emperor Maximilian having acquired the Tyrol by bequest, extended and impoverished it by conquests. In the early part of the sixteenth century their distresses were increased by religious disturbances and insurrections of the peasantry; and after the attachment of the Tyrol as an hereditary state to Austria, the war of the Spanish succession inflicted its curses upon the unfortunate Tyrolese; for the Elector of Bavaria, having united with Louis the Fourteenth, renewed an exploded claim to the Tyrol, and invaded it; but its inhabitants, faithful to Austria, and roused by the outrages of the Bavarian soldiers, flew to arms, and drove the invaders from their hearths; and the elector himself narrowly escaped

* This Leopold is remembered in history as having fallen at the celebrated battle of Sempach, which sealed the liberties of Switzerland.

the Tyrolese marksmen, for his chamberlain was killed on his side.

Every war of the Austrians has involved the Tyrolese; and in their contests with the French, since the commencement of the present century, the history of the Tyrol abounds with events which mark their devotion and their patriotism. The treaty of Presburg, in 1805, consigned them to the government of Bavaria. Indignant at being thus transferred, like serfs, they availed themselves of the first favourable moment to return to the protection of Austria. In the war of 1809 the Tyrolese particularly distinguished themselves by struggles upon their own soil against the French and Bavarians: almost every village in the course of the route described, witnessed the heroism of this brave people, who, under Hormayr, Hofer, and Teimar, performed prodigies of unavailing valour; and they fell again under the government of Bavaria, which they hated. The events that followed the Russian campaign of 1812 restored the Tyrol to the house of Austria, for which, rather than for themselves, they had fought so devotedly; and,—let it be mentioned with shame,—their devotion was rewarded by the emperor's refusal to restore to them certain privileges of which Bavaria had robbed them; and, by a miserable policy, which it is difficult to explain, he commanded the suppression even of the records of their exploits in his favour, and forbade the sale of the account of the revolution in the Tyrol of 1809, written by the brave and accomplished Hormayr, the commander of the Tyrolese, and the historian of his country.

ROUTE

FROM

NICE TO TURIN,

BY

THE PASS OF THE COL DE TENDE.

NICE has long possessed the reputation of having a climate and a situation peculiarly favourable to those invalids who arrive there from more northern countries; a circumstance that probably led to the improvements of the road which lies between this city and Turin, by the Col de Tende.

The situation of Nice is strikingly beautiful from many points of view in its neighbourhood, and many interesting remains of antiquity may be visited in short excursions from the city: these are sources of enjoyment within the reach of the valetudinarian, and add to the pleasures and advantages of a residence at Nice; but they are principally to be found coastways. The rich alluvial soil at the mouth of the Paglione, that descends from the Maritime Alps, gives a luxuriant character to the plain, which, near Nice, is covered with oranges, olives, vines, and other productions of a southern climate; but the moment this little plain is left, on the road to Turin, and the ascent commences towards Lascarene, the traveller must bid adieu to the country where "the oil and the wine abound." The sudden change to stones and sterility, with here and there a stunted miserable-looking olive-tree, is very striking; and the eye scarcely finds any point of relief from this barrenness until the little valley appears in which Lascarene is situated. Soon after, the ascent to the Col de Braus commences at the village of Tuet, and sterility recurs, where it is in character with the wild

and rugged acclivity, up which, a zigzag road—in some places blasted from the rock, in others terraced—winds safely and gradually; but it is ill preserved. The deep fissures and rifts in the mountain-side, which the route in some places fearfully overhangs, increase the wildness and grandeur of the pass. On the summit, the station of a cantonnier offers during storms a miserable shelter: the view thence over a barren country has great extent and grandeur, and the sea and coast towards Antibes are seen bounding the horizon.

On the eastern side of the Col de Braus,* the little town of Sospello appears, deep in the valley below, to which the road descends by a considerable *détour*; and the traveller from the summit finds that he has been deceived by its apparent proximity.† The valley of the Bevera, in which Sospello lies, is rich in wood: the olive and the fig are abundant; the latter in particular is an object of commercial value to the people of Sospello. The torrent of the Bevera flows into the Roya a few miles above Ventimiglia.

Immediately beyond Sospello the ascent to the Col de Brovis begins; and though less sterile than the Braus, it presents in the ascent a barren panorama; but after attaining the height of 4277 feet above the level of the sea, Breglio is seen from the summit, appearing like an oasis in these deserts, from the beautiful and luxuriant vegetation which surrounds it: these contrasts of scenery are striking in the route from Nice to Turin, and are peculiar to this passage of the Alps.‡

* The height of the Col de Braus is 3845 English feet above the level of the sea.

† As it was late in the day when the author left Nice, it was night before he reached Sospello, where he had an unwelcome reception from the dirty old padrona of *les quatre nations*, who ushered him into a filthy room, which was blackened by musquitos, which disputed with the fleas the privilege of destroying sleep. The author advises travellers to reach Gendola or Tende the first day, where there are excellent inns.

‡ In a little hut on the Col of the Brovis, an old soldier is stationed as a cantonnier: he came out and offered to the author the welcome of rest and refreshment: he brought delicious peaches, bread, rum, and *eau-de-vie d'Andaye*: these might have been sighed for in vain in places of greater promise. The garrulous, cheerful, and

The descent from the Col de Brovis is over a well-constructed road, which gradually leads, by long zigzag terraces, down to the little post-station of Gendola, where a good inn offers, among other excellent refreshments, the delicious trout of the Roya, and good accommodations. Gendola should divide the journey from Nice to Coni.

This part of the valley of the Roya is very richly wooded; large chestnut and ilex-trees are mingled with the varied forms and colours of the caroubier, the olive, and the vine. There is an air of neatness about the spot, which contrasts forcibly with the abrupt and barren peaks of the surrounding mountains. These are so lofty and so near, that in the depth of winter the sun cannot be seen at Breglio, a town half a league distant from Gendola, on the opposite side of the river. The estuary of the Roya is at Ventimiglia on the Mediterranean, about twelve miles below Breglio.

A little beyond Gendola the defile commences through which the road is carried, on the banks of the Roya. In some places the road is terraced, or built out on arches; in others hewn from the rock which overhangs it.* But sombre and savage as this defile is, it fails, from its proximity to the river, to excite those fearful emotions which are so appalling in the Via Mala, on the route of the Splugen, and in some parts of the Val Dovedro in the pass of the Simplon, where the head turns giddy in seeking to trace the course of the water struggling through the depths of its passage below the road. A striking scene occurs about an hour from Gendola, where the road crosses the river, and the town of Saorgio is seen from a little opening in the defile, stuck above the road on the face of the mountain, in a situation singularly wild and romantic:† its houses seem to be hung out in front of the

intelligent old man, who was a Bordelais, fought some of his battles over again. He had served at Dunkirk against the English, in 1794; and he had subsequently been employed eighteen years as a *gen d'arme*. He had been engaged in the campaigns of the Alps; and in some of his latest services he had assisted in extirpating the brigands which formerly infested these mountains.

* Title Vignette.

† Plate the First.

steep, and apparently inaccessible, rocks. A few chestnut, olive, and fig-trees, relieve the eye; and the effect of the scene is heightened by the view of the fort of Saorgio,* on a peak of rock which commands the approaches to the town by the defile. Immediately below the fort, the road crosses the river by a single arch, and then passes through the narrowest and deepest part of the ravine, at the foot of the vast rock upon which the fort stands. A tabular face has been cut upon the rock over the torrent, upon which is the following inscription:—

PUBL. CISMONT. AC CITRAMONT. DITIONIS BONO
ITALIÆ AC TOTIUS ORBIS COMMODO
INVIIS UTRINQUE ALPIUM MARITIM. PRÆCIPITIIS
FERRO FLAMMAQUE PRÆCISIS,
D. CAROLUS EMANUEL III.† SABAUD. DUX XI. P.P.P.P.
PACE BELLOQUE FÆLICISS.
PROPRIO MOTU, PROPRIO SUMPTU, PROPR. INDUSTRIA
HANC VIAM BASILICAM PERFECIT.‡

* Saorgio was the centre of an important military line, assumed by Savinia and supported by Austria, on the frontiers of France, at the commencement of the war which the powers of Europe entered into against the principles and leaders of the French Revolution. The Committee of Public Safety opposed to the Austro-Sardes a cordon of troops, which checked an invasion. Some severe fighting took place in 1793, especially at Saorgio, which post General Colli gallantly defended against the desperate attacks of the French, who gave to the fort the name of *le petit Gibraltar*, where they sacrificed thousands of lives in their efforts to force the Sardinian line. At the end of 1793, the insurrections of Lyons and Toulon led to the removal of a part of the French troops, with General Kellermann. In the campaign of 1794, the army of the Alps returned in greater force, and better organised, determined upon the invasion of Piedmont. Massena was appointed to the command of the division opposed to Colli; he consulted with Buonaparte who was at Nice, already distinguished, and holding the rank of Chief of Battalion of Artillery; the plan of attack recommended by him was adopted successfully; and Saorgio fell into the hands of the French on the 29th of April,—an event of great importance, as a part of a series of operations which gave to France the command of every pass of the Alps on her frontier. But dissensions in the revolutionary government prevented any brilliant consequence until Buonaparte received the command of the Army of Italy in 1796.

† He was the fourth Charles, as inscribed, but the first Charles Emanuel. He came to the dukedom in 1580. Another Charles Emanuel assumed the distinction of the Second in 1638.

‡ This is a little more modest than the inscription on the route of the Grotto, near Les Echelles. Yet the bombast amuses; for, like that, too, the original road has been so altered and improved, that the gratitude of the traveller is chiefly due to those

In the defile the ruins of several bridges are seen ; but whether these were destroyed by the contending armies in the campaigns of 1793-4, it is difficult to say, as the improvements in this route, which were made by Victor Amadeus III.,* might have led to their destruction.

After leaving the defile of Saorgio, the road opens into the little valley of Fontan, which affords a short but pleasant relief from the generally savage aspect of the country. The valley extends to Tende, a little town, of which Arthur Young complains, as being "black, stinking, dirty, and no glass;" and Smollett has left his malediction on the inn. The town has probably not much improved; but it would be unjust to allow an unfavourable impression to remain as far as it regards the accommodation to travellers: there are now two excellent inns, situated in the highroad which passes through the lower part of the town, and the Hôtel Royal offers good entertainment.

The appearance of Tende is remarkable: the town is built on the side of a steep hill, on the right bank of the Roya. The old castle of Tende commands the town and the road from its situation, and its ruins mark the former power of the feudal lords† who held it: it is built on a knoll on the

who made it practicable. It is an honest glory, however, to have commenced such a work to facilitate the intercourse of mankind; and the bombast of an inscription may be forgiven for the sake of the benefit which it records.

* Arthur Young, who crossed these Alps in 1789, says, that there was a long inscription in honour of Victor Amadeus the Third; and near it an old one to the eleventh Duke of Savoy: the latter inscription is quoted above. If an inscription to Amadeus exist, it escaped the observation of the author. Sulzer, however, who passed here in 1776, only three years after Victor Amadeus ascended the throne of Savoy, mentions it; though, as he speaks only of one inscription, it is probable that he made a mistake in naming Victor Amadeus for Charles Emanuel, and that Young has fallen into his error.

† The Counts of Tende were once independent and powerful, and their authority extended over many towns and villages. In the fifteenth century, the country passed under the dominion of the Dukes of Savoy, though this was above a hundred years later than the first dependence of Nice upon the same government. Tende was possessed by a family named Balbe, afterwards called Lascaris; because one of the descendants of Pierre Balbe married the daughter of Theodore Lascaris, the emperor of Constantinople. The Balbe-Lascaris, who also possessed Ventimiglia, sold that part of their domain to the Counts of Savoy, after these had acquired the country of Nice.—DENINA, *Tableau de la Haute-Italie*.

side of a mountain, which, rising above the castle, terminates in abrupt and pinnacled rocks.*

On the left bank of the Roya a little plain extends to the foot of the Col de Tende,† where the road enters a rocky valley, up which it is carried in zigzag turns, which are remarkably tortuous. An inn is situated about half-way up, called *La Ca*, which was built by the King of Sardinia, for the protection and assistance of travellers: it is a station for the carbineers appointed to guard the roads; and, formerly, the men who carried travellers in a *chaise à porteur* across the Col de Tende were stationed here. Its situation amidst the mountains is wild, and the scene, on looking back, presents the long winding road by which the ascent is made from the valley of the Roya;‡ but to attain the col, the road rises by a succession of above sixty turns: near the summit there is a little house of refuge, called the Osteria of Barraconi, which is often a welcome shelter in storms. The crest of the passage is an absolute ridge, 6162 English feet above the level of the sea: the scene from it is very extensive; on the north-west the range of the high Alps present their rugged pinnacles and snowy summits, even to the Monte Rosa, and, on looking back, the Mediterranean is faintly seen in the horizon. The descent to Limone is well constructed, and a rapid succession of tourniquets carries the traveller down towards the plains of Piedmont.§ The landlord of the inn at Limone was very communicative upon the present and former state of the roads; he said, that they owed to Napoleon the completion of the carriage-road over the summit of the Col de Tende, and its general improvement, as it was done under his direction, whilst Piedmont was annexed to France; it is certain, however that the road was made practicable for carriages as early

* Plate the Second.

† Generally called, in the country, the Col di Cornio.

‡ Plate the Third.

§ About one-third of the way from the summit is a grand work conceived and begun by Anne, duchess of Savoy, which, as a public undertaking, is one of the most gigantic ever attempted to be carried into effect: its object was to pierce the mountain, and carry a road through it, to avoid the often dangerous, and always tedious

as 1789, as Arthur Young passed the col in a voiture in the month of September of that year.*

From Limone, the road towards Turin passes through the valley of Vermenagna, which widens as it approaches its junction with that of the Gesso; the woods of chestnut-trees which clothe the sides of the valley—the meadows and corn-fields, and the villages of Vernante, Robilante, and Rocca-vione, enliven the road, and contrast cheerfully with the sterile and generally savage character of the route south of the Col de Tende. The river Gesso is crossed before the traveller reaches Borgo Saint Dalmazio, where, though its elevation is 1800 feet above the level of the sea, the plains of Piedmont may be said to commence; for the descent is so gradual towards Turin, that the road is only observed to decline by marking the course of the stream.

The Alps which bound the plain of St. Dalmazio, and like an amphitheatre, more than half surround it, are beautiful in their appearance; and when the bright pinnacle of the Monte Viso appears towering over the snow-line of the Alps, as high apparently above them as they are above the plain, it is one of the most striking objects in this route, as its height is more than 12,000 feet above the level of the sea. From Borgo St. Dalmazio to Coni is about six miles, whence the direct road to Turin, about twenty French leagues, lies through Savigliano; but to the traveller who is not pressed by business to hasten to the capital, a *détour* by Saluces and

passage of the Col de Tende. Victor Amadeus, in 1782, renewed the excavations; and workmen were engaged upon it until 1794, when the French took possession of the pass. Its length, if it should ever be accomplished, will exceed a mile and a half,—a work which, in its magnitude, will leave every similar enterprise in comparative insignificance: there is little probability, however, of this stupendous undertaking ever being completed.

* At Limone there is a custom-house,—a nuisance permitted to exist between two districts under the same government: the officers there exercised their power upon the author's baggage in an offensive way, unpacking every article, and examining every scrap of paper, and then begging something for not having annoyed him more and detained him longer. In general, the Sardinian *douaniers* are courteous in their disagreeable duty; but their conduct at Limone has been noticed before by English travellers.

Cavour to the Protestant valleys of Piedmont, and thence to Turin by Pignerol, over good carriage-roads, will repay his devotion of a few days to this visit. The Delphine is an excellent inn at Saluces; and the Canon d'Or, chez Bartolomeo Revel, at La Tour, in the Val Pellice, may be made head-quarters in visiting those interesting people the Vaudois, and the beautiful and magnificent scenes amidst which they dwell.

THE

PASS OF THE ARGENTIÈRE.

THE route from Coni to Embrun, by the Col d'Argentière, lies through Borgo St. Dalmazio; whence a good road for a light carriage extends up the valley of the Stura as far as Venadio. Soon after passing the village of St. Martino the deep course of the Stura appears, and, across the river, rising abruptly on its left bank, amidst some bold rocky precipices, the village of Rocca Sparviera. The scenery here is very fine; the forms of the mountains, the magnitude of the chestnut-trees, and the luxuriant richness of the cultivated land, arrest the attention. Soon after passing Rocca Sparviera the road descends in the valley, crosses the Stura, and continues on its left bank almost throughout the valley.

About four leagues from Borgo St. Dalmazio the traveller arrives at Démont, a town formerly remarkable for its fort, which guarded the valley of the Stura, and the communication with France by the Col d'Argentière. It had been memorable for its sieges in almost every war between France and Sardinia, until Piedmont became a part of France, in 1801, when the forts which guarded the defiles on the frontiers of Dauphiny were

demolished.* The ruins of the fort are on a hill so situated in the midst of the valley which it commands, that the road on one side, and the river on the other, pass its base. From Démont, the route which ascends the valley to Venadio is in some places highly picturesque, particularly where, in the foreground, the fine old trees occasionally cluster on the road-side; between their trunks, peeps are caught of the river, the valley, and the mountains; and the whole is enriched by the gourds and vines which festoon the branches of the trees. From the town of Venadio, the last important village in the ascent, the view down the valley of the Stura is very beautiful, seen almost in its whole extent. The fort of Démont in the distance, distinguished by the conical form of its hill; the river, the villages, and the rich vegetation of the valley bounded by mountains, some sterile, others richly wooded, form one of the finest scenes in the valleys of Piedmont.† From Venadio, up the valley, the change is rapid to wildness and Alpine appearances; and from the occasional narrowness and precipitous character of the road, it is impracticable for carriages of any kind, though the whole route to Embrun can be passed on mules. In ascending the valley of the Stura, the path sometimes lies close to the river, which appears quietly rippling through meadows; at others it winds along the perilous edge of precipices which overhang the gulf, through which the river struggles unheard at a great depth below. Such a scene as this occurs near the village of Zambucco.‡

Shortly after passing the villages of Pied de Port and Pont Bernardo, where the road crosses the Stura, the traveller enters a fearful defile, called the Barricades. In the defence of this frontier of Piedmont it is an important post, which has been as often distinguished for desperate conflicts as the fort

* Charles Emanuel I. built the fort of Démont in the sixteenth century, upon the ruins of an old castle, which had been razed by the Austrians in 1559. This fort the French and Spaniards blew up in 1744; it was afterwards restored, and finally destroyed in 1801.

† Plate the Fourth.

‡ End Vignette.

of Démon. The road is carried along a shelf of rock above the river, cut out of the precipices which overhang and darken the ravine, and presents an almost impregnable barrier to the passage of the valley. From the Barricades the road lies through the villages of Praynard and Bersesio, the latter is the principal place between the Barricades and the Col d'Argentière.*

* When the author passed through the Val Stura in 1826, he went in a light carriage from Coni to Venadio, where he hired mules for Barcelonnette, intending to rest at Pont Bernardo, and pass the Barricades in the morning. A fair had been held on the preceding day at Démon: the *négocians* and peasants, returning to their houses, crowded the little inns in the villages of the valley. At Venadio, when the author and a friend who accompanied him were prepared to start, a woman undertook to be their guide, and bring back the mules. They were soon joined by a village doctor, returning to Bersesio, whom the guide recognised as a *medico*. The day had closed upon them when they reached Pied de Port, near Pont Bernardo, where they sought for accommodations. Not a place could be had for shelter; the house was crowded with peasantry. After getting some wine, and the woman, as guide, had furnished herself with a lantern, the party proceeded, darkness begun, and the rain fell fast. The author had lent his mule to the *medico*, who was in advance of the party, in a narrow road, when a gun was fired at the terrified doctor. He said, that in the dark, and so far a head of the party as to appear alone, he had been mistaken by some robber for a *négociant* returning from the fair. The author and his friend were armed, and immediately advanced to the spot, but luckily without having their valour put to the test by brigands.

Soon after passing Pont Bernardo, a violent storm came on; and it was so dark that the guide insisted upon their dismounting, and leading the mules over the crazy bridge, which lay across a fearful torrent, already increased by the rain, whilst she held the lantern close to the planks, that both the mules and travellers might avoid the dangerous holes on the bridge. The dark pass of the Barricades appeared like a cavern, except when seen by the lightning; then the foaming torrent was lit up beneath them, and their situation seemed to be perfectly horrible. The woman now took the lead; and crawling about with her lantern amidst the rocks, soon misled them from the path, and they found themselves wandering amidst rocks and stones. At this moment, the mule, upon which the author's friend had again mounted, endeavoured to spring across a deep pit: a rock prevented the bringing of its feet together, and it fell back with its rider, fortunately without injury to the latter, who extricated himself immediately; but with the assistance of the lantern they saw the poor mule doubled up in the pit: they could only assist it by cutting the straps and removing the baggage. The guide became bewildered,—her terror of the storm and loss of her mule brought forth vows, curses, and prayers. *St. Anna* was her patron saint; and she poured out her solicitations that she would entreat the Virgin to extricate the mule, whose struggles soon ceased, and it was thought that the poor animal was dead. In this wretched situation the *medico* offered to take the lantern, and grope his way to the village of Praynard for assistance. This was their only resource, and he left them in darkness so great, that though the guide was near enough to touch, she could not be seen. For an hour they remained thus exposed to a dreadful storm of thunder, lightning, and rain,—a torrent roaring close by them. During this time, the mule, after remaining quiet for some time, recovered strength, and got

Above Bersesio the scenery is wild and rugged, the mountains presenting bare pinnacles of rock; but barley is still cultivated in the valley, and the pasturage is rich. After passing the villages of Argentière and La Madelaine, the path ascends directly to the col, which is soon and easily attained. Before arriving at the summit, the path skirts a little lake called La Madelaine,* the source of the Stura. From the summit, the view towards France is extensive, looking down the course of the Ubayette† towards L'Arche, the station of the French *douane*. Thence the road is uninteresting, through the villages of Certanusa and Meyronne to the junction of the Ubayette with the river Ubaye, where two roads lead into the Embrunnais; one following the course of the Ubaye, the other by St. Paul and the Col de Vars.

In following the Ubaye, the road descends by Chastelar and Jauziers through an uninteresting country, except at Pont de Cluse, to Barcelonnette, a town larger and better built than might have been expected in so sequestered a situation. From Barcelonnette, a path by the Col de la Vachère leads

out without assistance. The poor woman vowed in her gratitude five francs for a mass, and a picture of the *miracolo* for the chapel of St. Anna.

At length the horizon lit up as if assistance were coming, and in a few minutes four gigantic figures,—for their distance deceived,—appeared wrapped in storm-cloaks, with torches in their hands, descending amidst the rocks and stones; and the party was soon assisted by these hardy mountaineers to remove from an exposed and perilous situation. The author preferred proceeding, with their assistance, to Bersesio, rather than to remain at Praynard, where the mountaineers could only offer the travellers straw and *eau-de-vie*: of the latter the *medico* had availed himself while waiting for their return. At Bersesio they were directed to the house of the syndic, who was roused: the old man and his wife cheerfully got up and rendered all the assistance in their power; the author and his friend made tea, in a way rather primitive, ordered soup and wine for the worthy peasants, and after laughing, when the danger was over, at their adventures, forgot them in the sound sleep which their fatigue and comfortable beds produced; for in this wild mountain village, the luxury was added of throwing gum perfumes upon the hot ashes contained in the pan with which their beds were warmed. The poor guide had suffered too much to recover readily: she entreated the next morning that she might be allowed to return to Venadio, and that the syndic might, in her stead, conduct the travellers to Barcelonnette, to which they acceded.

* The name of La Madelaine is sometimes given to the Col d'Argentière.

† A torrent which flows into France from the Mont d'Argentière.

across the mountains to Embrun: but the *chemin royal*, as Bourcet* calls it, lies by the course of the Ubaye, though in many places not a vestige of a *chemin* appears; for the violence of the Ubaye and the streams which fall into it is so great in the winter, as to leave the entire valley for miles a bed of stones and black mud, with here and there a cluster of stunted willows; and the road is at the choice of the traveller in the whole breadth of the valley, to ford the torrents where they are most passable, and wind about through the mud-beds, where the willows grow, to find the hardest path. At length the river is crossed to arrive at Meolans, and thence down the valley there is a tolerable char-road. The pretty village of La Lauzet, the Goshen of the valley, is an exception to the general scenery: its little lake contains fine trout, and in the immediate neighbourhood there are fruit-trees and cultivated soil. But after crossing a hill, and descending a zigzag road at the pass of La Tour, in losing sight of La Lauzet, all is again sterile. On looking back, the deep course of the Ubaye is seen issuing from the defile of La Tour; and the grand forms of the mountain of *Cugulion des Trois Evêques* present a scene which is savage, mountainous, and dreary.† The road continues on the left bank of the river, high above its bed, until, leaving the hill upon which the fort of St. Vincent is placed, a very difficult path leads down to the river, which is crossed to arrive at the village of Ubaye. From this place, one road leads by the river Ubaye, to its confluence with the Durance, and another by the Col de Pontis to Savines, in the highroad between Gap and Embrun. From the ascent to the Col de Pontis, on looking back towards the valley of the Ubaye, the hill of St. Vincent is a fine object, surmounted by forts which formerly guarded the valley of Barcelonnette when it belonged to the Sardinian dominions. By a wise arrangement, it was

* Mémoires Militaires.

† Plate the Fifth.

ceded to France in exchange for the valleys of Pragelas and Exilles; the states having thus agreed upon the chain of the High Alps as the line of demarcation.

The other road to Embrun, from the Confluence of the Ubayette and the Ubaye, lies by the village of Glaisoles, and up the deep gorges of the Ubaye, by the strongly entrenched Camp de Tourneaux, which formerly guarded the entrance to France from the Barcelonnais, when the latter appertained to Sardinia.

To ascend the Col de Vars, the path leaves the valley of the Ubaye by the deep ravines of the Rioumonas, a mountain-torrent which falls into the Ubaye a little below St. Paul. The road, or rather path, along the precipices of slate rock which overhang these torrents, so rapidly wears away, that in many places it is very dangerous; but there is not intercourse enough at present to make the formation of a better road an object of sufficient importance to the government. The little villages of Le Serret and L'Entraye lead to the Col de Vars, which is not very difficult of ascent. From its south-eastern side, the fine panorama of mountains is very striking. The descent of the Col de Vars is gradual, over a fine pasturage; thence passing through St. Marie and the village of Vars, the traveller descends the mountain-brow, between the valleys of the Vars and d'Eserans; and a magnificent scene opens upon him of Guillestre and the fort of Mont Dauphin, the valley of the Durance, and the mountains covered with glaciers, which flank the Col de Lautaret.*

From Guillestre, a road passes close to the rock upon which fort Dauphin is built, whence it leads, in about two hours, to Embrun, by the highroad from Italy to France, which crosses the Mont Genève.

One of the most extraordinary events connected with the history of the Col d'Argentière, was the passage by it of Francis I. across the Alps, in 1515. In previous invasions the French had entered Italy by the passes of the Mont

* Plate the Sixth.

Cenis, or the Mont Genève; but these were now so strongly guarded by the Swiss, who were in the pay of the Italian princes, that it was necessary to find access by some other, which the Swiss either did not suspect, or believed to be impracticable. The Marshal Trevulzio undertook to ascertain if there were any other pass; and the result of his inquiries among the peasants of the Maritime Alps was, the assurance that the Argentière was one by which the passage might be accomplished from Dauphiny to the marquisate of Saluces. The army having been assembled in Dauphiny, was concentrated upon Embrun, where it was provided with five days' provisions. On the 10th of August, 1515, the march commenced by Guillestre and the Col de Vars; but the difficulties of the army began at the defiles of Rioumonas and the Ubaye, where it was necessary to make a road on the sides of the rocks, for the conveyance of the artillery. A corps of 2500 pioneers was formed, who so effectually did their duty, that the army entered the valley of Barcelonnette on the second evening. On the third day the passage of the Argentière was accomplished, and Francis descended into the upper valley of the Stura; but obstacles occurred at the Barricades, near Pied de Port, which arrested his progress. These were removed on the fourth day; on the fifth the army entered the plains of the marquisate of Saluces, and on the 14th of September fought and gained the celebrated battle of Marignano.*

* Sismondi, in his "Histoire des Républiques Italiennes," speaking of the difficulties of the passage, says: "Tour-à-tour il falloit faire sauter les rochers pour s'ouvrir un passage, ou jeter des ponts sur l'abîme, ou élever, le long des précipices, des galeries en bois. Soixante et douze grosses pièces d'artillerie devoient passer par ce chemin, avec la colonne centrale de l'armée, la cavalerie pesante, et les bagages; deux mille cinq cents pionniers et sapeurs, en régimens, et payés comme l'infanterie, les accompagnoient pour ouvrir les chemins. Mais le zèle des simples soldats étoit plus efficace encore; il s'atteloient à l'artillerie au lieu de chevaux, et ils déployoient autant d'intelligence et d'adresse que de courage pour surmonter les difficultés inouïes que leur opposoit la nature."

One interesting and important event in this campaign was the capture of Prosper Colonna, the celebrated Roman General, who had been sent by Leo X. to join the Swiss. He was stationed at Carnagnole with 500 men-at-arms and some light horse. Francis having been informed of his situation, and thinking that it would be a gallant

In 1692, Victor Amadeus II. invaded France, and crossed by the Col d'Argentière from Piedmont into the Embrunnais; and in the war of 1744, when the Spanish and French armies,

enterprise to attack him there, despatched some of his bravest officers upon the expedition. Amongst these were Bayard, La Palisse, Imbercourt, and d'Aubigny: they crossed the mountains before the army was ready to start, and reached the town of Rocca Sparviera, situated on the left bank of the Stura, a few miles from Coni. At Rocca Sparviera they were greatly assisted by the Signor de Morete, who, acting as a guide, conducted them by a difficult path across the mountain-ridge which divides the valley of the Stura from the Val de Grana, and thence to Savigliano; thus avoiding Coni, where a body of Swiss was stationed.

From Savigliano the French determined to attack Colonna at Carmagnole. It is probable that he had received information of their intentions, as he hastily left Carmagnole to join a body of Swiss under the Cardinal Schinner, at Pignerol. On his way thither he stopped to dine at Villefranche, where the French surprised him, and made him prisoner. The gallant party then fell back upon Fossano, to await the descent of the army under Francis; and the Swiss who were at Coni hastened to join Schinner's troops at Pignerol.

This affair has been related by Sismondi with such utter disregard to the geography of the Alps, that it ought not to pass unnoticed. *Martin de Bellay, the Mémoires de Fleurange*, the author of *L'Histoire du bon Chevalier*, all state clearly that the conquerors of Prosper Colonna passed by the Rocca Sparviera to Villefranche; and not one of them, though quoted by Sismondi, states anything about the route across the Alps which he describes. He says ("Histoire des Républiques Italiennes"), that they went "*de Briançon à Villefranche, et aux sources du Pô par Sestrières*;" though he knew and has stated that the pass of the Genève was guarded by the Swiss, and that Bayard went by Rocca Sparviera. To persons unacquainted with the Cottian and the Maritime Alps, his statement may appear to be clear; but to those by whom they are known, such a jumble of names, without the least regard to their bearings or distances as connected with the object of the march of the detachment, betrays an ignorance of the subject unworthy of the historian. If possible at all, six ridges of mountains must have been traversed, most of them higher than some of the passes across the great chain.

From the memoirs, quoted by Sismondi, of those who were engaged in the expedition, it is clear that the object of Bayard and his party was to reach Carmagnole. The most obvious route to attain it was by the Argentière, which was known to be practicable and unguarded. This was doubtless the one which they took, as it led directly to Rocca Sparviera; a spot where they were assisted by guides, particularly mentioned in their account of the expedition. Neither Paul Jovius nor F. Guicciardini, whom he also quotes, has led him into this error, though the latter is evidently as ignorant of the Alps as Sismondi, and has substituted towns for mountains. Unfortunately, it is not in relating the capture of Colonna only that Sismondi has betrayed his ignorance of the geography of the country: he sends the soldiers of Francis, on the second night down to Barcelonnette, four leagues below the spot where they entered the valley of the Argentière, only to make them march up again the next morning to the point from which they started; and he has removed L'Arche from the French side of the Alps. It appears that this country has not been visited by historians; but that, guided by bad maps and former authors, Guicciardini and Gaillard, Sismondi and Simond, have confounded the names of cities and towns, villages and Alpine passes: Coni has been transferred from the plains of Piedmont

commanded by the Infant Don Philip and the Prince of Condé, invaded Piedmont, they passed also by the Col d'Argentière.*

It is very uncertain whether any passage was known to the Romans across the Maritime Alps. Denina, in his "Tableau de la Haute-Italie," mentions a second Emilian way made by Marcus Æmilius Scaurus, from Savona, by Tortona, westward through the country of the Vagienni,† and thence by the valley of the Stura to Embrun: but the authority for this statement is very obscure.

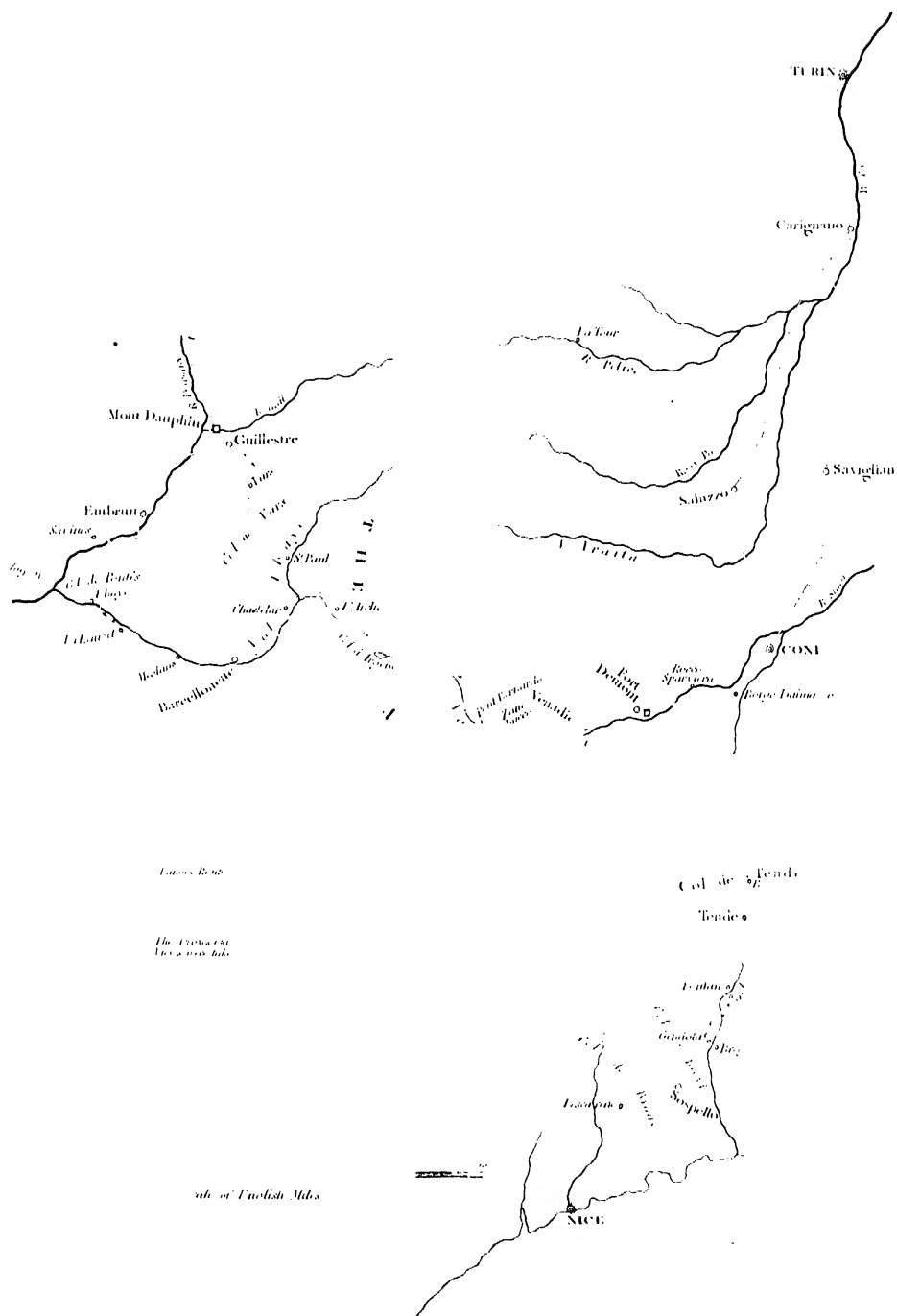
The facility with which a good road, always practicable, might be made across the Argentière, is obvious, and it may yet be accomplished, to the great service of France and Piedmont; both would gain by increased facilities of communication. The author's guide from Bersesio said, that a survey had been made in the time of Napoleon, having for its object the formation of such a road: but too many of those which he began have been neglected, to induce the hope that an event so desirable will be effected by his successors.

to become "a pass south of the Argentière, towards Provence;" and the village of Rocca Sparviera has, according to Simond, who refers to Sismondi, been removed to somewhere "between Briançon and the source of the Po." The only correct map of these districts is Bourcet's; and his "Mémoires Militaires sur les Frontières de la France, par Piémont et de la Savoie," is the only faithful work upon the subject;—in it every practicable path for man or mule is indicated.

* The events of this invasion are related by the Marquis de St. Simon, in his "Histoire de la Guerre des Alpes en 1744." Every village in the valley of the Stura was the scene of the horrors of warfare. The pass of the Barricades was forced, and the allied armies descended the valley of the Stura, where they took the fort of Démont by the use of red-hot shot. They afterwards besieged Coni, and near this city fought the Sardinian army, commanded by Charles Emanuel III., who, though he lost the battle, succeeded in throwing relief into Coni, which was gallantly defended. After it had been for some time unsuccessfully invested, the storms of autumn, and the want of supplies, which were intercepted by the Piedmontese peasantry, compelled the allies to raise the siege, and to recross the Alps, towards the latter end of November. On their retreat they destroyed the fort of Démont, and afterwards suffered the severest privations from cold, hunger, and fatigue. Though assailed by the peasants, and exposed to storms, they returned to France over frozen roads and through deep snow, with all their artillery, and with a few guns, taken from the Sardinians,—the miserable trophies for which they paid thousands of lives, and millions of treasure.

† The Vagienni were a people of Piedmont, whose territory extended to the summits of the Maritime Alps.

PASSES OF THE ALPS



ROUTE

FROM

GENEVA TO DOMO D'OSSOLA,

BY

THE PASS OF THE SIMPLON.

THE beauty and grandeur of the scenery which enriches the course of the route of the Simplon, and the display which is there presented of one of the most daring and successful of the efforts of man, by the formation of a road for his free progress, where the barriers placed by nature had appeared to be insurmountable, are sources of pleasure, of admiration, and of amazement, to the traveller, which are excited in a much higher degree upon this pass of the Alps than upon any other where a road has been accomplished.

From Geneva, the route to the Simplon commences with the beautiful scenery of the lake; and the traveller has the choice by arriving by either shore at Saint Maurice, in the Valais. One road passes by the Pays de Vaud, on the Swiss side, through Coppet, Nyon, Rolle, Lausanne, Vevay, and Bex; the other, which is four leagues shorter, passes, on the Savoy side, through Thonon and by the rocks of Mcillerie, where the construction and improvements of the road, in correspondence with those of the Simplon, have been considered as part of that great undertaking.

Soon after leaving Geneva, on the side of Savoy, the road passes through Cologny, whence, looking back, there is a beautiful view of Geneva, extending over the sites of numerous *campagnas*, which surround the city, and embellish the vast garden which is spread out at the lower extremity of the lake.

The road, after leaving Cologny, passes through Dovain, the first village in Savoy, to Thonon, the chief town of the province of Chablis. Thonon is situated on the shores of the lake at its widest part, where it is three leagues across. A little beyond this town the road leaves on the left the convent of Rapaille,* and proceeds to Evain, which is nearly opposite to Lausanne.

The finest parts of the new road, which borders on the lake, lie between Evain and Bouveret; this includes the magnificent constructions by the rocks of Meillerie, where the road is carried thirty feet above the waters of the lake on a terrace in front of the rocks, which have been cut away; the bases of these rocks sink, almost perpendicularly, to a level with the waters of the Mediterranean; for the greatest depth of the lake which is found near this shore, is above 1000 English feet, and the level of the lake is 1200 feet above the sea. The scenery along this shore is very beautiful, and across the lake objects of interest rapidly succeed each other from Lausanne to Vevay, Clarens, and the Castle of Chillon.†

At St. Gingulph, the territories of Savoy are again left, and the traveller enters the Swiss canton of the Valais; and, after passing on the left the swampy and extensive *embouchure* of the Rhone, which opens into the lake of Geneva, he arrives at Saint Maurice, the natural frontier of the Valais. The single arch thrown across the Rhone from the Canton de Vaud,—a picturesque object, which may be found in the folio of every artist and amateur who has passed that way,—and

* This abbey was built by Amadeus the Eighth, duke of Savoy, who founded a convent of Augustine monks there, and retired from the government of Savoy to become the chief of his convent at Rapaille. During the disgraceful contests for the chair of St. Peter's in the fifteenth century, when three popes governed at once, Amadeus was elected one of these, by the reunited council of Bâle, in opposition to Eugene IV.; he assumed the keys of St. Peter as Pius II., and kept his court at Bâle, Geneva, and Lausanne. After having created twenty-three cardinals, issued bulls, and given other proofs of his authority, he retired from the government of the church, which he had found to be more difficult than the government of the state of Savoy: he died in his bishopric of Geneva in 1451.

† With these places are associated the names of Gibbon, Kemble, Rousseau, and Byron!

the high rocks which bound the course of the Rhone, give to the scene a wild and imposing character. These rocks are the bases of the lofty mountains, the *Dents de Midi et de Morcles*, which are separated by the river, that rushes through the gorge, foul and foaming, into the bosom of the lake. During its repose there, the Rhone deposits its impurities, and flows out at Geneva bright and pure, and of the tint of heaven; until, again admitting the companionship of the foul Arve, it passes on contaminated and in violence to the sea.

The bridge, which connects the two cantons, and the castle now in ruins, at the entrance to the Valais, have, in the love of antiquity, been attributed to Julius Cæsar; but this is questionable, and there is a greater probability of their having been built by the bishops of Sion, when the preservation of temporal power was so important to them: a toll was exacted upon the bridge, and a port cut off all communication with the Canton de Vaud when necessary. Saint Maurice was known to the Romans under the name of Agaunum, and numerous inscriptions mark its antiquity. The name of St. Maurice was derived from its abbey, founded in the sixth century by Sigismond, king of the Burgundians, in honour of St. Maurice, who is said, in the legends of the church, to have suffered martyrdom here, with all the Theban legion which he commanded, amounting to 6000 men, in the year 392; a tradition as true, probably, as that of the 11,000 virgins of Cologne. Near St. Maurice are some retreats cut out of the face of an apparently inaccessible rock, where, in holy idleness, the *anachorètes de la Thébàide* formerly dwelt apart from the world. The sterility and wretchedness of the country, which extends about two leagues from St. Maurice to Martigny, is scarcely anywhere relieved by an object of interest, except at the magnificent cataract of the Pisse-vache: this falling torrent is first seen from the village of Mieville;* but its real

* End Vignette.

grandeur cannot be appreciated, owing to the magnitude of surrounding objects, except by approaching as near to it as possible, and climbing on a hill formed by the soil which has been thrown up by the tremendous force of the waters from a basin which they have excavated. In this situation, the noise, the volume, the velocity, and the height (for it appears to be poured out from the heavens), are appalling in their sublimity; an exquisite beauty is added to these in the morning, when the sun, shining on the light mists which are dashed up by the cataract and float around it, paints them with splendid irises, which vary in intenseness of colour as currents of air change the density of the mists. Not far from the Pisse-vache, the route passes the narrow gorge, whence the black waters of the Trient issue, to flow into the Rhone; and shortly after the Drance is crossed, beneath an old castle of the bishops of Sion, near Martigny.* From Martigny, the route of the Simplon ascends the valley of the Rhone at a right angle with its previous course from St. Maurice, and passes through the middle of the valley direct to Sion: this part of the Valais is spread out into a flat plain, swampy and unhealthy, where the heat of summer is intensely felt, and millions of musquitos exhaust the blood and spirits of the unfortunate traveller whom they assail. The chains of mountains which bound the Valais are of enormous height; and as many of the peaks rise from 10,000 to 14,000 English feet above the Rhone, this valley may be considered the deepest in the known world. It is bounded on the south by the great chain of the Alps, from Mont Blanc to the Saint Gothard, including the Cervin and the Monte Rosa; and on the north by the Alps of the Oberland Bernoise, in which rise the Finsteraarhorn, the Jungfrau, and other enormous peaks.†

* A view is given of the valley of the Rhone from the castle, in the illustrations of the *Pass of the Great St. Bernard*.

† The dreadful afflictions of goitre and cretinism, which prevail to a great extent in the Valais, have been attributed by some authors to the stagnation of the air in

Above Riddes the road crosses the Rhone, and on approaching Sion the marshes disappear, and fine pasturages and vineyards mark a more favoured spot. Near Sion, on the rocks which overhang the river, are the ruins of the old castles of Séon and Montorges, which frown in their decay over the valley that once groaned beneath the power of their tyrant owners, the bishops of Sion, whose names are consigned to infamy.* Their monstrous assumption of temporal authority roused at length the Valaisans, who had deserved their oppression and punishment for having so long forborne to crush the power assumed over them. The day of retribution came at last in 1417, when the bishop was expelled, and his castles burnt and destroyed; and where these abodes of tyranny had only been viewed with a shudder and a curse, are now seen houses and vineyards, which excite emotions of pleasure, to which the *ruins* of the castles contribute. Sion is situated in the widest part of the Valais; its appearance is remarkable from the chain of rocks on its eastern side, which are crowned with the old castle of Valérie, some Roman remains, an old Gothic church, and the ruins of the residence of Theodore, who was the first bishop of Sion, in

this and other deep valleys of the Alps; and by some, to the waters of the glaciers, which the inhabitants drink: but these, and many other causes which have been conjectured, appear to be equally fallacious. Goitres and cretins are nowhere seen in greater numbers and deformity than in the valley of Aosta; yet the valley of Anzasca, which is nearly parallel with it, is entirely free from these afflictions, although the inhabitants live in a deep valley, and drink the waters of the Anza, which flow from the glaciers of the Monte Rosa. Nor are these diseases confined to valleys; even in the plains of Piedmont, near St. Dalmazio, these objects of disgust and pity are common. The author has adopted an opinion, arising from extensive observation, that one of the chief causes of these complaints is to be found in the dirty habits of the communities afflicted. This is an opinion entertained by the clean and healthy mountaineers, who are free from goitre, and by the inhabitants of those valleys where personal cleanliness is regarded: for this the Anzascaans, a race of fine men and beautiful women, are remarkable; whilst the dirty wretches where the affliction is found, stay all the winter with their cattle, seldom or never change their clothes, and dread water as if their disease were hydrophobia. Three or four filthy generations produce goitre, and it requires as many of clean habits to remove the punishment for their foul offences.

* The bishopric of Sion or Octodurum is one of the most ancient in Gaul. Theodore, a bishop of Octodurum, assisted at the Council of Aquila in the year 381.

the year 600. Another château, much more elevated than the former, is called Tourbillon, which was built by the bishops of Sion in 1492: it is attained by a narrow and difficult path among precipices. This castle, now in ruins, was the residence of the notorious bishop Matthew Schinner, who performed so important a part in the affairs of Italy at the commencement of the sixteenth century, and is remembered with infamy by the world. A third château, called Majorque or Mayerbourg, the residence of the later bishops of Sion, was at the foot of the hills of Valérie and Tourbillon; but it was burnt in the great fire of Sion in 1788. From the ruins of Tourbillon, the view up and down the valley is very fine. Opposite to Sion, the Val d'Herens opens into the Valais; it communicates at its upper extremity, by a very difficult pass across the glaciers, with the Val Pellina on the side of Aosta. Ascending the Valais above Sion, the traveller finds little to interest him. Opposite to Sierres, another valley, called the Val d'Annivers, opens from the great chain of the Alps. This, and the valley of Herens, are little known to travellers; and the inhabitants, who are singularly primitive in their manners, are said to be rather uncivil to their visitors: this is reported to have been the character of the Upper Valaisans before the advantages of a more extensive intercourse with the world, by the formation of the route of the Simplon, led to a just estimate of its benefits, and the removal of jealousies. A little above Sierres, the new road re-crosses the Rhone, and continues on its left bank through the forest of Pfyn. The *débris* of the mountains brought down by the torrents from the southern boundary of the valley, render the preservation of the road very difficult in many parts of the route between Sierres and Tourmagne. On passing the *embouchure* of the valley of the Dala, in which the baths of Louesch (Leuk) are situated, the savage mountain-barrier of the Gemmi is seen, where an extraordinary road, for the pass which communicates with the Oberland Bernoise, is cut

on what appears to be a perpendicular face of the mountain; yet it is practicable in perfect safety for mules, and the pass from Louesch to the valley of Kander is one of the most remarkable in the Alps. Ascending the valley of the Rhone, the traveller crosses the torrent which descends from the Monte Rosa and the Monte Cervin, and issues from the valley of the Visp. The rivers which flow from the enormous glaciers of those mountains having united at Stalden, about eight miles up the valley, above the village of Visp, descend with great impetuosity, and join the Rhone, often with a larger body of waters than those into which they flow. Soon after leaving Visp, the road crosses the torrent of the Gamsa, near the remains of an ancient wall, supposed to have been built by the Romans, but which was the actual frontier of the Viberians, who inhabited the Upper Valais from the Gamsa to the source of the Rhone. The next post station above Visp is the town of Brigg, situated nearly forty miles below the source of the Rhone, at the foot of the Simplon. Its appearance is very singular; it is deeply seated amidst enormous mountains, and its towers, which are covered with tin plate, have an eastern character of form. During the years 1798, 1799, some severe battles were fought near Brigg. The Valaisans, and especially the inhabitants of the Upper Valais, a very brave race, resisted, with desperate courage, the invasion of the French; they fought to preserve their institutions from foreign interference, but they were compelled by numbers to submit, and were at last united with France in the department of the Simplon. But the change was of infinite benefit to them; the evils of the Revolution have passed away, and with them the evils which had long existed in the Valais. Its inhabitants hated the rest of the world, but in no proportion to the hatred which the Upper and Lower Valaisans bore towards each other. An equality of rights, and the removal of local restrictions, destroyed the sources of hatred and jealousy which had for ages divided them. The influx of strangers through their country, and

the transport of merchandise by the new route of the Simplon, have been sources of wealth and prosperity. After the events of 1815, the Valais, formerly an ally only of Switzerland, became incorporated with the cantons, and preserved the benefits which it had derived from the Revolution.

At Brigg the valley of the Rhone is left, and the ascent of the Simplon commences. Some parts of the route in its course almost to the summit, may be traced on the sides of the dark and savage ravine through which the torrent of the Saltine descends from the glaciers of the Kaltwasser or Schonhorn. These glaciers, close to which the summit of the road passes, are seen from below; and it is rather fearful to contemplate, at such a height and distance, the point which must be attained by the traveller who would enter Italy by the Pass of the Simplon.

The route really commences at Glys; but as the best inns and accommodation are found at Brigg, travellers, almost without exception, commence their passage from the latter place,* as a short branch-road connects Brigg with the great route above the Pont de Saltine, which is 116 feet above the torrent,—one of those bold constructions which add to the wonders of this route; thence the road continues on the left towards mount Calvary,† and after turning through the Brand-wald ascends to the base of the Clemmenhorn, which bounds the eastern side of the valley of the Saltine. Here the scene is very grand; the rugged summits of the Glyshorn rise on the other side of a deep ravine, and tower above the passenger with awful effect; high up on the sides of the Glyshorn, fields and cottages are seen, so lofty and

* It appears to have been usual formerly for travellers to assemble in numbers, and cross the mountain together. An author who travelled in Italy by the Simplon, in the year 1695, says, "those who enter Italy by this route assemble at Brigg, in order to pass together, with mutual assistance, those frightful mountains of Saint Plom. We met there about forty persons."

† A name common in Catholic countries to a hill which terminates a series of altars, or, as they are called, *stations*, where in Easter week certain ceremonies are performed.

sloped as to appear inaccessible. The road winds round the base of the Clennenhorn into the deep and savage valley of Ganter, which terminates in glaciers. Across this valley, or rather ravine, a bridge is thrown, 80 feet above the torrent, and the road ascends by a zigzag to the station of the third refuge* or Bersal, where there is an inn and post-house: thence following a course around the projections, and into the sinuosities of the mountain, the route again overhangs the deep ravine of the Saltine, its depth being concealed in many places by the pines and larches which clothe the sides of the mountain below the traveller. Some of these trees are of enormous magnitude, and some, stripped of their bark, and withered or crushed by the falling of rocks or avalanches, add by their form and colour to the grand and wild character of the scenery. The cottages on the sides of the Glyshorn, which appeared from below to be inaccessible, are now seen on the other side of the ravine, scarcely above the traveller, surrounded by fields of corn and fine pasturages, and attainable by paths, which the mountaineer climbs with great facility. Continuing to ascend, the elevation soon exceeds that at which the pine flourishes, larches endure a little longer; but these are few and stunted, and scarcely reach beyond the gallery of Schalbet, which is a rock excavated 100 feet in length, through which the road passes. After traversing this gallery, the scene becomes excessively wild and arid; the road winds along the brink of precipices, at a short distance only below the glaciers of the Schonhorn, whence torrents descend, which are the sources of the Saltine; these, led through finely constructed aqueducts, pass beneath the road, and fall into the ravine below. At the foot of the glaciers another gallery has been cut through the rock, 140 feet in length; but to guard against the avalanches to which this part of the road is exposed, covered ways have been recently constructed,

* Houses established on the line of road for the protection of travellers in storms.

in connexion with the glacier gallery, which extend their protection across the places exposed to danger.

The scene from the summit is very magnificent; between the Schalbet and the glacier galleries, the eye can descend to Naters, a village in the valley of the Rhone, and rise to the prodigious peaks which pinnacle the range of the Bernese Alps. From beyond the glacier gallery the view extends to the great glaciers of Alesch, which add their brilliancy to the scene; these, however, and the valley of the Rhone, cannot be seen from the same point: but the magnificent peaks of the Breithorn, the Jungfrau, and the Monch, form with their glaciers, over the deep valley of the Saltine, one of the finest scenes in this range of the Alps.* A little beyond the glacier gallery the highest point of the passage is attained: it is 6562 English feet above the level of the sea. Here there is a house of refuge, and a barrier where a toll is paid of six franes for each horse. The summit of the Simplon is a plain, rather spacious, but wild and desolate, except in the summer, when there is a rich pasturage on the mountain, and flocks enliven the scene a little; nothing, however, can be conceived more dismal than its winter aspect. The summit is exposed to dreadful storms,† and it was for protection against these that

* Plate the First.

† "Le Général Turreau éprouva une de ces tourmentes, lorsqu'au retour de son premier voyage à Brigg, accompagné de son état-major et des ingénieurs des deux brigades, il voulut repasser le Simplon pour retourner à son quartier-général à Domod'Ossola. La neige tomboit en abondance; un vent violent et glacial de nord-ouest nous enveloppoit de tourbillons épais qui nous suffoquoient. Le général, ayant été renversé trois fois dans la neige à l'entrée du Col, malgré les efforts des personnes qui l'accompagnoient, et des gens du pays amenés exprès pour aider au passage, donna ordre de retourner à Brigg. M. l'ingénieur en chef Lescot, et moi, nous trouvant à quinze pas en avant de ses aides-de camp, ne pûmes entendre l'ordre; et après avoir attendu le général et nos camarades autant qu'il fut possible de le faire dans une semblable position, nous fîmes contraints d'avancer, et continuâmes la route avec deux hommes du pays, sans le secours desquels nous eussions infailliblement péri. Nous arrivâmes de nuit, épuisés par six heures d'une marche excessivement pénible, au village du Simplon, qui n'étoit éloigné que de deux lieues du point de séparation sur le Col. La neige, fortement gelée en grains fins, et sans cesse roulée par le vent, avoit si peu d'adhérence, que, quand l'un de nous tomboit, ce qui arrivoit souvent, il disparoissoit entièrement, et que l'on ne distinguoit l'endroit où il étoit que par l'agitation que ses mouvemens communiquoient à la surface de la neige,

the plan of an hospice was laid out and commenced; but little beyond raising the walls above the foundation was accomplished; its plan extended to two hundred feet long, seventy feet wide, and three stages high. It was proposed to place there fifteen persons, monks and domestics, and the establishment to have been a dependence upon the Great St. Bernard; but it has been delayed or relinquished. There is, however, in the plain, on the right of the present route, an hospice, a singular-looking building, where travellers, overtaken by storms, or having met with accidents, are received by two or three brothers of the Great St. Bernard.

After passing the Old Hospice, the plain narrows to a valley; and having crossed the torrents which descend from the Rosboden, the traveller enters the village of Simplon, situated 4840 feet above the level of the sea. A very comfortable inn in the village offers rest and refreshment; and on arriving late from either side of the mountain, it is desirable, in order to enjoy the scenery of the pass, especially on the side of Italy, to remain at Simplon for the night, and descend the next morning. After leaving Simplon, the road advances towards the deep gorges of the Dovedro. From a part of the road where it makes an abrupt turn, the entrance to the gallery of Algaby is perceived, far below in the ravine; but this appears so mere a speck, as to create a doubt of the possibility of the road passing through it. To follow the course of the Dovedro, an abrupt *détour* is made into the ravine of the Krumbach; thence descending to the banks of the Dovedro, the traveller soon after enters the gallery of Algaby, 230 feet long, and bordering on the torrent; thence the route accompanies the Dovedro in its deep

comme si c'eût été un fluide : aussi en arrivant trouvâmes-nous tous les interstices de nos vêtements entièrement remplis de neige ; celle qui avoit pénétré jusqu'au corps, à demi-fondue par sa chaleur, et regelée ensuite par l'accroissement du froid de la nuit, s'étoit prise en masse et moulée sur les parties qu'elle enveloppoit, sans que nous nous en fussions aperçus pendant la marche."—*Observations*, &c. par A. R. POLONCEAU.

seclusion until it escapes into the Val d'Ossola, at Crevola. Here begin what are called *les belles horreurs* of the Simplon: the rocky and perpendicular bases of the mountains approach more closely, leaving only space for the road and the foaming torrent, which the latter in some places entirely usurps; and in such places the road is carried through galleries cut in the rocks. Where the ravine narrows, the mountains which bound it appear to increase in height. The road is sometimes scooped into the side of the rocks, sometimes it seems suspended over the abyss, and when neither a terrace nor a gallery can be made on one side, as at the Ponte Alto, a bridge of admirable construction crosses the torrent, and a line is found on the other side, where the route can be carried forward. From the overhanging rocks, in some places a thousand feet above the traveller, torrents are poured out, some of which from their height descend broken into mist; others, falling upon a shelving rock, foam in white lines over its surface: and near Gondo, a river gushes out with violence, and falls into the Dovedro. But the wonder of this part of the road is the great gallery, which is formed just below the place where a bridge leads from the right to the left bank of the Dovedro. The ravine appears to be closed in, and the only passage is by one of the most stupendous works ever accomplished—a gallery, cut through the granite, 596 English feet long, which at the opening on the Italian side crosses the waterfall of the Frassinone: this torrent, falling from a great height, rushes through the bridge thrown across it, and descends above 100 feet into the Dovedro, where the latter river, forming a cataract, meets the waters of the Frassinone in horrible commotion: it is a spot unrivalled in its astonishing effect.*

In the gallery there are two lateral openings, to light the traveller and to facilitate the excavation of the gallery, as

* Title Vignette.

four gangs of workmen were put on at the same time ; these were relieved, and the works proceeded night and day during the formation of this wonderful excavation. Opposite to one of these openings, the following inscription is cut on the rock, —ÆRE ITALO 1805.

A little below the gallery the road descends by a zigzag, where the ravine widens, and displays more awfully the heights of the rocks, which project in some places over the road. Masses like enormous towers, with perpendicular sides, bound the valley, and the road is carried through this extraordinary pass upon the *débris* which slopes down to the torrent.* Soon after, a strange and lofty building is seen, which serves as an inn and a place of refuge for travellers : this, together with a chapel and some cottages, form the village of Gondo. Near it a few trees begin to relieve the horrors of the defile of Dovedro. At length meadows appear, and amidst some fruit-trees is seen the village of Issel, on the frontier of Savoy, where the passports and baggage of travellers are examined. A little below Issel is another gallery, cut through the rock, but only thirty-four feet long : at this place the scenery loses much of its severity, but suddenly resuming it near Trasquera, the gigantic forms of the rocks are scarcely less awful than near Gondo. After having passed these, the traveller crosses the Cherasca, and enters upon the beautiful little amphitheatre in which are situated the villages of Dovedro and Varzo : here, the valley spreading out on the left, strikingly contrasts with the surrounding scenery, and displays houses, trees, vines, and meadows. The route thence continues, amidst scenery of less interest, to the last gallery, that of Crevola, which is carried nearly 200 feet through a rock, that has an opening cut on the side next the river for the admission of light. The road afterwards ascends to the little hamlet of Morgantino, and passes the

* Plate the Second.

quarry whence the blocks of white marble were hewn for the columns of the triumphal arch erecting at Milan to commemorate the construction of the route of the Simplon.* From Morgantino the route gradually lowers to where the grand and beautiful Ponte Crevola crosses the Dovedro, at its entrance into the Val d'Ossola. This bridge is first seen where a view of the plains of Domo d'Ossola is also presented. The landscape is one of singular beauty; and its effect, bursting upon the traveller at the end of his journey through the savage defile of the Dovedro, is very impressive.†

The bridge of Crevola is one of the finest structures in the world: in the middle of the torrent a pier is raised 100 feet high, which carries two arches, resting on the rocks on either side of the ravine; its strength and elegance are equally remarkable: to do justice to it, the traveller should descend and view it from below Crevola.

From the bridge, the road proceeds in a direct line to the town of Domo d'Ossola. The richness of the plain, the brightness of the sky, and the mildness of the climate, already announce the Italian side of the Alps. The language, the costumes, and the manners, mark a people which differ greatly in character from even their nearest neighbours on the northern side of the mountains. Vines and Turkish corn enrich the appearance of the country, and the former are treated in a manner peculiar to this part of Italy. Posts of gneiss, which are obtained with great facility in this neighbourhood, are placed upright in the ground, and these have poles laid across them, upon which the vines are trained: this plan affords facility of access to the fruit, and the ground is not exhausted by the props, which is the case where trees are grown to support the vines. Near Domo d'Ossola is a Sacra Monte, or Calvary, where, in a series of *stations*, groups as large

* There are eight of these columns, each thirty-six feet long.

† Plate the Third.

as life, in terra cotta, represent events in the passion of Christ, some of them are hideous, others are cleverly modelled. The hill is worth the traveller's visit, not only for these, but for the enjoyment of the beautiful scene from the chapel on the summit.

Domo d'Ossola is a place of great antiquity; it was founded by an ancient people of Etruria, and bore the name of Oscella before the erection of its cathedral; from this it derived the addition of Domo, which name alone it generally bears among the inhabitants. From Domo d'Ossola, the route descends towards Milan, through the rich plain watered by the Toccia, and the rivers Ovesca and Anza, which flow into it from the Alps, through the valleys of Antrona and Anzasca; the latter valley ascends to the Monte Rosa, and leads across the great chain by the Pass of the Moro, into the Valais: it is one of the most interesting valleys in the Alps, and abounds with scenes of unrivalled beauty and sublimity. In descending towards the Lago Maggiore the route passes the Toccia, before arriving at Vogogna, and repasses it near the village of Ornavasso; thence it proceeds, leaving the Toccia on the left, and, near the little village of Gravello, traverses the Negoglia, a river by which the waters of the Lake of Orta flow into the Lago Maggiore.* Shortly after, the route descends

* At one time it was intended to direct the course of the route of the Simplon by the Lake of Orta, to turn off at Gravello and avoid the shores of the Lago Maggiore. This was the plan of General Chasseloup; but the necessity of rising to the level of the Lake of Orta and descending again to Arona, presented so many disadvantages, that the plan was abandoned. The route, however, by the Lake of Orta, anciently known as the Lacus Cusius, is one of singular beauty; and it is extraordinary that this romantic lake should be so little known. From Baveno, on the Lago Maggiore, to Omegna, on the Lake of Orta, is not more than two hours' drive, on an excellent carriage-road, which, leaving the route of the Simplon at Gravello, ascends the course of the Negoglia to Omegna, where boats may be had to take passengers or carriages to Buccione, at the head of the lake, passing by the town of Orta and the Isola de San Giulio, near the middle of the lake. There is a fairy appearance about this little island which is very beautiful, and its early history is not without romance. It is celebrated for the high antiquity of its church, in which the vertebrae of a whale are shewn as those of a monstrous serpent which infested the island, and which was destroyed by San Giulio, who lived in the fourth century, and whose ashes are preserved in a subterranean vault. So much for tradition. It is recorded, however

to Fariolo, and the Lago Maggiore bursts upon the traveller with all its beauty, its magnitude and its splendour. Baveno, on the western shore of the lake, is a post station, and the place where travellers usually hire boats to visit the Borro-mean islands; and there is no spot whence the grand forms of the mountains which surround the lake are so picturesque, or a view of the lake so beautiful: to this the islands greatly contribute, with the exception of the Isola-bella, which is worthy only of a rich man's misplaced extravagance, and the taste of a confectioner.*

that as early as 590 the island gave title to a dukedom, when Minulfo, duke of St. Giulio, favoured the descent of the Franks by the St. Gothard; but in the following year, Astolpho, the new king of the Lombards, punished him with the loss of his head. The island appears to have possessed great strength. Guilla, the wife of Berenger the Second, king of Lombardy, took refuge there in 962, and resolutely defended herself for two months against Otho the First, emperor of Germany, who had invaded Italy and deposed her husband. Otho restored the island to the bishops of Novarro, who had long held it, before it was seized and usurped by Berenger. The town of Orta, opposite the island, is well built; and there is an excellent inn there, where travellers may be well accommodated at less than half the expense of the inn at Baveno. Behind Orta a hill rises, which is a sanctuary, dedicated to Saint Francis of Assise; upon it nineteen chapels are distributed, some of elegant architecture, and containing groups of figures in terra-cotta, and pictures. The hill is laid out like a beautiful garden: this is the general character of the land bordering the lake, whence, probably, its name. The views from the hill of the sanctuary are charming. The lake is about nine miles long, surrounded by lofty mountains and wooded slopes, and having many villages on its shores. From Pella, between which village and the town of Orta lies the Isola S. Giulio, a mule-road leads over the mountain, by Arolo, to Varallo in the Val Sessia. At Varallo is the *Nuovo Gerusalemme* of Piedmont; its Sacra Monte, the most remarkable in Italy, is visited by thousands of devotees annually. From Baveno to Varallo by Pella, is only a day's journey; and the author, who has twice been that way, has no recollection of any scenery superior to the variety and beauty presented in this excursion.

To go to Arona from the Lake of Orta, the traveller lands at Buccione, at the head of the lake. The view from the road above this village is very fine, where the high peaks of the Monte Rosa add their grandeur to the beauties of the scene. (Plate the Fifth.) A carriage may be hired at Buccione, which, passing through Borgomaniera, will reach Arona in two or three hours. It is reported that such a road as that which was proposed by General Chassoloup has been decided upon by the King of Sardinia. It is to be made immediately, from Omegna to Buccione, to go round the eastern shore of the lake, and pass through the town of Orta.

* It is curious to observe the national differences of taste with which the Isola-bella is regarded. A French author writes, "L'Isola-bella elle est digne de son nom; elle ressemble à une île enchantée; palais merveilleux, magnifiques jardins, arbres odoriferans, fontaines cristallines, statues, fleurs choisies, tout s'y trouve." Another, "L'Isola-bella est d'un genre de beauté qui tient du prodige. C'est à

From Baveno the road is carried along on the borders of the lake on terraces of admirable construction, and scarcely less worthy of praise than the works in the ravine of the Dovédro. The scenes are beautiful along the western shores of the lake to Arona, through Stressa, Belgirate, and Lesa. On the approach to Arona, the statue of St. Carlo Borromeo is seen on the right of the road, upon a hill, to which a path leads from the route of the Simplon, about half a mile before arriving at Arona. This path conducts, in twenty minutes, to the celebrated bronze statue; and the traveller should not fail to visit this extraordinary work of art. It is placed in so favourable a situation, that a beautiful view of the Lago Maggiore is enjoyed at the same time, particularly from a short distance west of the statue, whence the Lake, the village of Angera on its opposite shore, and some mountains of the great chain in the Rhetian Alps, are seen. On the right are some of the chapels of the Sacre Monte of San Carlo; and below them, on the borders of the lake, the overhanging precipice beneath which the route of the Simplon passes to Arona.* The statue, with its pedestal, is 112 feet high, of which the pedestal is one-third. The head and hands are cast from models made by Cerano; they are of admirable workmanship, and the mild, dignified, and benevolent expression of the head exceeds all praise. The drapery is composed of sheets of copper, so ingeniously wrought that

merveille de l'art et de la nature en même temps, une véritable île enchantée. Ses bosquets ne peuvent être comparés qu'à ceux d'Italie; ses jardins qu'à celui des Hespérides; son palais qu'à celui d'Armide." An English author describes the gardens as raised "on a pyramid of ten terraces resting on arches, which are built upon the rocks of the island, and each of the angles of the terraces adorned with acute pyramids of stone, resting upon balls at the angles of their bases, and bearing on their apices wretched tin ornaments; some of the angles have trees, 'fantastically carved;' others, ugly, disproportioned statues, each holding tin emblems: the grand figure surmounting all this trumpery is equestrian, with tin feathers springing from its back, intended perhaps for Pegasus." Another author says, "This whimsical structure, from a distance on the lake, suggests the idea of a huge Périgord pie, stuck all over with heads of woodcocks and partridges." What is taste? the French and Italians admire all this, and they say that they are judges.

* Plate the Sixth.

the edges are concealed in the folds, and the appearance of the whole statue is like a single cast. The action of the figure is that which is used in the church of Rome in blessing; the right hand is extended, the left holds a book. This statue was erected in 1697, at the expense of the Milanese, in reverence and in gratitude to their patron saint. The artists employed upon it were Siro Zanelli of Pavia, and Bernardo Falconi of Lugano. It is certainly one of the wonders of Italy, if not of the world.

The entrance to Arona from the Simplon is at the foot of a huge cliff which overhangs the lake, and it is difficult to pass beneath it without feeling an emotion of danger. The town from many points is picturesque; its port on the lake is enclosed within walls, having the opening flanked by two towers; between these a chain is drawn at night, which closes the entrance. This is the chief port belonging to Sardinia on the lake, and is of much importance to this government; for all the merchandise going from Genoa and the states of Sardinia to Switzerland, passes by Arona. Between this port and Locarno, the commerce, since the completion of the route by the Bernardin into the Grisons, is considerable; and a great increase of intercourse with Switzerland may be expected when a carriage-road, now in progress, over the St. Gothard, shall have been completed. The borders of the lake are within three governments—the Lombard-Venetian, the Swiss canton of the Tessin, and that of Sardinia.

At an hour's drive from Arona the lake contracts and forms the river Tessin, which is crossed on a flying-bridge, where the traveller leaves Sardinia, and arrives at Sesto Calende, in the Lombard-Venetian States. From Sesto Calende to Milan, about ten leagues, the magnificent route, which bears the name of the *Strada Sempione*, lies through a country unequalled in the abundant productions of its soil, but it is devoid of picturesque interest, except where the great chain of the Alps, stretching across the horizon, is seen from some parts of the

road, particularly near Somma, with its chief and beautiful object, Monte Rosa, towering over the range. On the right of this mountain lies the Monte Leone, which bounds the Pass of the Simplon.* By those who see the Alps for the first time under such an aspect, they are often mistaken for light clouds lying on the horizon, their bases being generally invisible through the haze of an extensive intervening plain. There is an exquisite beauty in their appearance under these circumstances, which cannot be described. The route continues through numerous towns and villages,—among others, Gallarate, Castallanza, and Ro; the latter is remarkable for its magnificent church. Milan is scarcely seen before it is entered. When near it, a glimpse is sometimes caught of the spire of the Duomo, but the traveller generally arrives abruptly under the walls of the city.

The grand entrance to Milan, from the Strada Sempione, by a triumphal arch, which is intended to commemorate the formation of the route of the Simplon, is not yet completed; but the Austrian government in Lombardy, after having allowed the work to remain neglected for many years, has at length been urged by shame, or a better feeling, to proceed with this magnificent structure, and there is some hope of its completion. The design by the Marquis Luigi Cagnola, and the admirable execution of such details as are prepared, lead to the expectation that it will be, when finished, the grandest work of its class.

The early history of the Pass of the Simplon is involved in much obscurity, and nothing certain is known even of the origin of its name. It is supposed to have been frequented in very early ages; and there is a tradition, that three years before the battle of the consuls Marius and Catullus with the Cimbri, the consul Q. Servilius Cœpio led some Roman legions across this mountain to oppose those northern enemies

* Plate the Seventh.

of Rome, in Transalpine Gaul. Some have sought the etymology of the Simplon in the consular name of Sempronius; but no certain events are recorded which determine the passage of any Roman consul by the Simplon. In many old accounts of the pass it is called Saint Plom; but whether a classical name has thus been vulgarised, or this has been derived from some Catholic saint, is as uncertain and obscure as the dark ages through which these traditions have descended to us. The future importance of the Simplon, however, will be referred to Napoleon only, under whose orders the present road was constructed.

The new route of the Simplon was, in its intention and its execution, a military work.* It was determined upon immediately after the battle of Marengo, whilst the difficulties of the passage of the Great St. Bernard, and the almost fatal check of Fort Bard, were fresh in the recollection of Napoleon. In November 1800, he directed the minister of war to send two brigades of engineers, under General Turreau, to open a route practicable for artillery across the Simplon. The first of these brigades was stationed between Brigg, on the Swiss side of the pass, and Algaby; and the second between Algaby and Domo d'Ossola, on the side of Italy. Little appears to have been done, and that not in the most judicious way, until, in the winter of the same year, M. Céard, who was at that time engineer-in-chief of the department of

* Napoleon has been charged, by those who can see no redeeming trait in his character, with constructing works only to gratify his ambition or his vanity, and not to serve mankind: let the reply to this accusation be found in the following list of some of the public works executed or commenced under his orders in France, Italy, Germany, and Holland, between 1800 and 1812:—Eighteen new routes, exceeding 500 leagues; eighty new bridges, exceeding 60 feet in length, of which 30 are from 300 to 2000 feet; thirty great canals; the Seine, the Loire, and other rivers, rendered navigable by tunnels, dykes, quays, sluices, &c.; twenty-five ports constructed or re-established, among which are the ports of Antwerp and Cherbourg.—See *Travaux des Ponts et Chaussées depuis 1800; ou, Tableau des Constructions Neuves faites sous le Règne de Napoléon 1^{er}. en Routes, Ponts, Canaux, et des Travaux entrepris pour la Navigation Fluviale, des Dessèchemens, les Ports de Commerce, &c.* Par M. COURTIN, Secrétaire-Général de la Direction Générale des Ponts et Chaussées. Paris, Gœury, 1812.

Leman, received the orders of the minister of war, and the director-general of the *ponts et chaussées*, to take charge of the operations on the Simplon, as engineer of the works and inspector-general. This distinguished engineer arrived at the Simplon on the 22d of March, 1801, and immediately surveyed the entire line of road, which he varied in many important points from that which had been intended by those who had preceded him, and became the author of the plan ultimately adopted for the traverse of the mountain, as well as of those additions which rendered this magnificent road complete, from Domo d'Ossola to Arona, on the side of Italy, and from Brigg to Thonon, on the side of Switzerland.*

The works of the Simplon were shortly after their commencement transferred to the superintendence of the minister of the interior, but their execution from the beginning had been confided to the engineers of the *ponts et chaussées*. Under each of those authorities M. Céard continued the chief engineer and superintendent of all the works to their completion.†

* It had been contemplated by the Cisalpine republic to open the route of the Simplon as early as the year 1798, when M. Céard was consulted upon the undertaking by the Italian minister Cerbellini, at the house of the minister Le Croix, in Paris. The abilities of M. Céard were also called into service on the passes of the Jura, Cerdon, and Mount Tarrare; and he may be said to have been employed in removing the mountain obstacles which existed between the Simplon and Paris.

† The chief engineer of such a stupendous undertaking would naturally be jealous of the distinguished honour which its accomplishment obtained from an applauding world. After fifty years of distinguished public service, M. Céard had retired, in 1815, to the bosom of his family, to repose beneath his laurels, when an attempt was rudely made to wrest them from him by one who had held a subordinate situation in the works of the Simplon. In a national publication, entitled, "*Monumens des Victoires et Conquêtes des Français*," &c. published by Panckoucke, at Paris, and edited by M. Ch. Dupin, the route of the Simplon was thought worthy of the honour of holding the first place: but the book is disgraced by the following unjust report of the engineers engaged upon the Simplon: "Nous terminerons cette description des travaux du Simplon en disant quelques mots des ingénieurs qui les ont exécutés. M. Lescot, premier ingénieur-en-chef, fut, après sa mort, remplacé par M. Houdouart. Les quatre jeunes ingénieurs qui ont tracé la route avec tant de courage et de zèle, et qui ont triomphé des plus grandes difficultés de l'entreprise, sont MM. Cordier, Polonceau, Coïc, et Baduel." "M. Polonceau est maintenant ingénieur-en-chef du département de Seine et Oise: c'est à son obligeance que nous devons une foule de renseignemens précieux sur la route du Simplon. La notice que M. Polonceau a bien

Between the Mediterranean and the Tyrol there are now ten carriage-roads across the Alps, and others are in progress by the Saint Gothard and the Maloya. Austria has constructed the Stelvio, but it was to serve her own interests in

voulu nous remettre à ce sujet nous a été du plus grand secours. M. Cordier et M. Polonceau sont les seuls ingénieurs qui aient dirigé les travaux depuis leur première trace jusqu'à leur achèvement." "M. Céard, inspecteur-divisionnaire, à partir de la fin de l'an IX. (1801), fut chargé de l'inspection des travaux : on lui doit le plan de deux ponts principaux." This report has evidently been furnished by M. Polonceau, who has made M. Ch. Dupin the agent of his vanity and injustice ; "Les quatre jeunes ingénieurs," at the time of their accompanying General Turreau to the Simplon were *élèves ingénieurs*, pupils of *l'École Polytechnique*, who were fortunate in being appointed upon such a work as the Simplon, before they had even finished their studies in the School of Application ; they held no grade as engineers. Under M. Céard they rose to distinction, and were recommended by him to the government. How M. Polonceau repaid the obligations, his *renseignemens précieux* sufficiently shew. M. Céard, who was living when the "Monumens des Victoires et Conquêtes" was published, hastened to vindicate his just claims to the honours which he had received, in a pamphlet (*Mémoire et Observations Historiques et Critiques sur la Route du Simplon*, adressés à M. Ch. Dupin. Par N. Céard. 4to. Paris, 1820), which contains such evidence as exposes the unfounded pretensions of M. Polonceau ; who, in a reply (*Observations sur un Mémoire relatif à la Route du Simplon*. Par A. R. Polonceau), has made a futile attempt to screen himself from the discredit which has recoiled upon him in the endeavour to outrage the honour of his ancient chief. M. Polonceau's reply principally confines itself to points relating to the works, which are merely matters of disputed opinion between professional men : it replies also to some charges of insubordination and obstinacy ; but it contains not one line of admissible excuse for having employed the work of M. Ch. Dupin to boast of the honours of which he had despoiled another.

A slight inquiry must have discovered the fact, that M. Polonceau was a very young man, about the age of twenty, who had just left school, when he went with General Turreau to the Simplon, only a few months before he was placed under M. Céard. Yet, in the notice above quoted from these *renseignemens*, M. Polonceau says, that he and M. Cordier "*sont les seuls ingénieurs qui aient dirigé les travaux, depuis leur première trace jusqu'à leur achèvement.*" Can any person believe Napoleon guilty of the folly of intrusting such a work to untried boys ? Why was M. Céard called upon by the government in a little more than a month after the brigades under General Turreau had reached their destination ? Certainly to employ his known skill and ability as engineer-in-chief and director of the works ; which implies how little the party already there had the confidence of the government. M. Polonceau acknowledges, in his reply to M. Céard's charges, though he withholds it in "*renseignemens précieux*," that "dans le même hiver, M. Céard, alors ingénieur-en-chef à Genève, fut chargé de l'inspection générale de la route ; fonctions qu'il a remplies d'abord sous le titre d'ingénieur en chef directeur, ensuite sous celui d'inspecteur-divisionnaire,"—this was when his plans were being carried into effect, and his duty was to inspect their completion ; and he did superintend the works until they were finished, under the authority of the Ministers of the Interior, for which he received their acknowledgments, and honours from Napoleon. M. Polonceau says, page 3 of his *Observations*, "Mais l'article de M. Dupin étoit consacré à la gloire des nations Française et Italienne, et non à celle des individus." Why then so particu-

the control of Lombardy. It has been said that her influence in the court of Sardinia has been a great check to the improvements of which Piedmont and Savoy are capable, and this influence has been especially exercised in preventing

larly claim the honour for himself of which he would despoil another? If the least doubt can remain of M. Polonceau's having taken a credit to which he had no claim, the following extract from a letter, dated 10 Vendémiaire, an X. (October 2, 1801), addressed by his mother to M. Céard, must remove it:—"Si les travaux doivent continuer, veuillez, Monsieur, demandez sans délai un élève pour remplacer mon fils? &c. On ne me persuadera pas que mon fils en ce moment soit nécessaire pour la conduite des travaux. N'étant que très-subordonné pour ces opérations, tout autre peut tenir sa place. L'autorité d'inspecteur-général des travaux du Simplon laisse entre vos mains le sort de mon fils," &c.

In 1812, a work was published by M. Courtin, secrétaire-général de la direction générale des ponts et chaussées, entitled, "*Travaux des Ponts et Chaussées depuis 1800, ou tableau des constructions neuves faites sous Napoléon, en routes, ponts, canaux.*" &c. In this work, the author, who had official information and authority, writing of the Simplon, page 46, mentions "M. Céard, auteur du projet;" and in page 53, "les ingénieurs qui ont fait exécuter cette belle route, sous la direction de M. Céard, auteur du projet, sont MM. Houdouart, Cordier, Plainchant, et Polonceau. MM. Gianelli et Bossi, ingénieurs Italiens, ont exécuté la partie du côté du royaume d'Italie." The French brigade on the Italian side, between Algaby and Donno d'Ossola, was, after about eighteen months, recalled; when it was replaced by the Italian engineers, MM. Gianelli, Bossi, and Viviani; of whom M. Céard makes most honourable mention, as having overcome, on their side of the Simplon, difficulties which greatly exceeded those with which the first brigade had to contend.

One reason for delaying the publication of the Pass of the Simplon until the last Number of this Work, was to make full inquiry into the subject, and to examine the plans, papers, and other documents, in the possession of the son of M. Céard, at Geneva: these were shown, in September 1829, to the author, who had by this time possessed himself of every work referred to by M. Céard in his memoir, as well as others upon the subject, and also of the reply of M. Polonceau, with which M. Cordier has identified himself in a sort of postscript, wherein he seems, from the tenour of his remarks, to have fancied that a sneer could remove his share of the discredit attached to the transaction, but which it has only served to confirm. M. Polonceau is said to rank high in his profession as an able engineer: if so, his excuse is the less, for having attempted, surreptitiously, to take the distinguished honours of his former chief to add to those which he had himself fairly acquired.

The circumstances which led to this inquiry and statement on the part of the author of the "Passes of the Alps," will be found in the following letter:—

"MONSIEUR,

Genève, le 17 Juillet, 1827.

"Quoique je n'aie pas l'honneur d'être connu de vous, permettez moi de vous écrire dans les circonstances que voici.

"J'ai vu, il y a peu de jours, entre les mains de M. Deluc, le naturaliste en cette ville, une des livraisons du beau recueil que vous avez composé et que vous publiez sur les Passages des Alpes; et j'ai pensé qu'il vous seroit agréable d'avoir sur celui du Simplon les notices contenues dans le petit ouvrage de mon père, que je me permets de joindre à la présente, en vous priant de l'accepter. Mon père, Monsieur, fut chargé dans le temps par l'Empereur Napoléon de faire le projet de la route qui

the construction of a good carriage-road across the Little Saint Bernard. The accomplishment of this would be one of the most important services which Carlo Felice could render to his subjects of the duchy of Aosta, of the Tarentaise, and of Faucigny. At present this benefit is withheld, from the fear of a possible invasion by that road from France. Were the French restrained by the want of good roads in 1800? The subjects of Austria feel not the injury of withholding this boon, but the Piedmontese and Savoyards do, and their government ought not to sacrifice the interests of her subjects to the fears and jealousies of Austria. To make a carriage-road over the Little St. Bernard would be attended with no difficulty: it is already the easiest of the unmade passes of the Alps; and the expense of forming a good road from Bourg Saint Maurice to Pré Saint Didier would be borne with cheerfulness by the inhabitants on the line of road from

devoit traverser le Simplon,—une pareille commission exigeoit chez celui qui en étoit chargé des talens et une grande expérience: j'ose dire que mon père possédoit l'un et l'autre; il s'acquitta des ordres qui lui furent donnés à cet égard, personne ne travailla au projet que lui; et je possède, à la disposition de tous ceux qui pourront désirer le voir, le plan original de ce projet, dessiné de la main de mon père, et revêtu de l'arrêté d'exécution du directeur-général du corps des ponts et chaussées. Indépendamment de ce premier mérite, que personne, sans l'injustice la plus criante, ne peut contester à mon père, et que je réclamerai tant que je vivrai pour sa mémoire, il a eu celui de diriger les travaux jusqu'à leur entière exécution, et de mettre de l'ensemble dans les opérations des ingénieurs qui lui étoient tous subordonnés pour cette grande opération. Voilà, Monsieur, des faits dont je puis fournir la preuve par tous les papiers de cette grande affaire, qui sont entre mes mains. Vous comprendrez d'après cela, l'indignation qu'éprouvoit mon père quand il a composé l'écrit que j'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer, qui pourra d'ailleurs vous être utile par les renseignemens qu'il contient, et par la carte qui y est jointe, dont toutes celles qui ont paru depuis ne sont que des copies plus ou moins complètes.

"J'aurois cru, Monsieur, ne pas faire tout ce que je dois à la mémoire de mon père, si, aussitôt que j'ai eu connaissance de votre bel ouvrage, je ne vous avois pas mis à même de dire un mot de l'ingénieur qui a travaillé à aplanir, dans un de leurs passages, ces Alpes que vous avez tant étudiées et admirées dans leur immense et majestueux ensemble.

"Si j'étois assez heureux pour vous voir un jour à Genève, ou pour pouvoir vous fournir quelques documens qui puissent vous être utiles, veuillez être persuadé, Monsieur, de l'empressement que je mettrois, soit à vous donner de vive voix, soit à vous fournir par écrit, tous les renseignemens qui pourroient vous être agréables.

"J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une considération très distinguée, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

"CÉARD, Procureur-Général de la République et Canton de Genève."

l'Hôpital Confians to Ivrea, whom it would more immediately benefit. The French under Napoleon had surveyed the pass with the intention of making such a road, and it is to be hoped that this desirable object may yet be accomplished. It would greatly add to the influx of strangers into Piedmont, who would thus be enabled to visit the eastern side of Mont Blanc, the baths of Cormayeur, and the beautiful valley of Aosta, and who, instead of spending so much of their money in Switzerland, would disburse some of it in visiting the beautiful scenery of Dauphiny and Piedmont.

The object originally contemplated by the author of this work, was an illustration of the route of Hannibal across the Alps; he had become interested in this subject chiefly by reading that clear and able inquiry, entitled "A Dissertation on the Passage of Hannibal over the Alps, by a member of the University of Oxford." After an attentive perusal, it occurred to the author, that such scenes and facts as the site of an encampment, the locale of a roche-blanche, and a ravine where an accumulation of snow could occur, were subjects which the pencil might illustrate, and remove, by views of those scenes, the doubts which description alone might have left. The author visited the Alps expressly for this object; but after having traversed the great chain by several passes, he thought that the subject was capable of extension, and that scenes illustrative of the various routes across the Alps, would be interesting to those who had not travelled there, and renew the recollections of those who had. Fidelity of representation, rather than picturesque effect, has been his object as an artist; and in his examination and inquiries into the topography and history of the Alps, he thinks that he may, without presumption, claim the merit of not having lightly undertaken his task; since he has, expressly for this work, before and during its publication, traversed the Alps nearly sixty times, and by above thirty different routes into Italy, from the states on its frontiers.

With reference to the passage of Hannibal, the result of the author's examination and inquiry has left upon his mind the most perfect conviction, that it was by the Pass of the Little Saint Bernard, and that it is to this pass only that the description of Polybius can apply. The adoption of this author's history of the event, as the sole authority upon the subject, has been induced by his declaration, that he made journeys in the Alps expressly to retrace the steps of Hannibal. These journeys were made within a few years after the event which Polybius describes, while persons were yet living who had been eye-witnesses of the passage of the army, and who furnished him with information and details. He avows that the object of his retracing the steps of the Carthaginian general arose not only from his admiration of the exploit, but to settle the contradictions which had even then appeared in the narrations of those who described the event, and who had already embellished it with fables. The history of Polybius is remarkable for its clearness and detailed description of scenes and events. Unfortunately, from his having written in Greek, few of the names of places, or of the people in the line of march, are recorded by him; but the times and distances are so carefully marked, and the places where certain events occurred are so clearly and admirably described, that the true route has been discovered by the evidence which still exists, in perfect concurrence with his account; and these coincidences are found on the Pass of the Little St. Bernard, and on no other.

Various authors have supposed a different line of march, but they have either taken Livy as authority, or attempted a reconciliation of Livy with Polybius: this, however, is impracticable, for Livy is so inconsistent with himself, that an actual examination of the Alps, upon the route which he states to have been the pass of Hannibal—the Mont Genève—is at variance with his own description; whilst the absurdities with which he has laden his narrative shew that he had adopted such fabulous accounts as Polybius had despised and

rejected, and had sought to reconcile them with the clear and simple narrative of Polybius himself, where such narrative related to the passing events of the march, but without acknowledging the author from whom he had so largely and literally borrowed.

The errors into which those have fallen who, in writing upon the subject of Hannibal's passage, have taken Livy as authority, have arisen from their being as ignorant of the Alps as was Livy himself, and from having fancied that maps and descriptions alone were requisite, not only for understanding the subject, but for informing others. This has produced the absurdities of Whitaker and Folard, and the errors of Letrone and of many others. Some, with preconceived notions, have traversed the Alps, and eked out their conjectures by bits from Livy and Polybius, quoting from the one or the other where it favoured their views, and rejecting both under the charge of error, presumption, or interpolation, where neither could be made to agree with the theory which they had originally formed.

Very few of the authors who have written upon the subject of Hannibal's passage are worth the trouble of confuting. Nothing but actual survey can determine what pass agrees with Polybius's description of the occurrences. General Melville, a man admirably qualified to investigate the subject, with the history of Polybius in his hand, traversed many of the passes which had been supposed to be the route of Hannibal; but it was upon the Little Saint Bernard only that he found those coincidences of place and distance with the events of Hannibal's march, which established his conviction that it was there that the Carthaginian army had passed. The result of his labours and investigation he placed in the hands of Mr. Whitaker, who, treating the communication with contempt, fancied that by maps and authors alone he could arrive at a conclusion more favourable to his prejudices upon the subject. This led him into such errors as those of supposing

the site of an encampment of 30,000 men to have been where 500 could not be drilled!—the existence of a market town, the Forum Claudii, on the Great Saint Bernard!!—and such a view of the plains of Italy, that Hannibal pointed them out to his soldiers, and shewed them “through clouds immediately under their feet, the very position of Rome itself, at the distance of 400 miles, in some bright ray issuing from a distant cloud”!!! It was fortunate that General Melville’s papers were not mixed up with the follies and pedantries of Mr. Whitaker’s book. These papers afterwards fell into the hands of M. J. A. Deluc, of Geneva, whilst he resided in England; and struck with the remarkable clearness of the general’s views, M. Deluc has given to the world a “*Histoire du Passage des Alpes par Annibal*” (Geneva and Paris, 1825, 2d edition), which appears to have set the question at rest, at least of the passage of the great chain by the Little Saint Bernard, and generally of the entrance to the Alps by the Mont du Chat.*

Since M. Deluc’s work appeared, two English gentlemen, Messrs. Wickham and Cramer, have traversed the Alps by every route which has been conjectured to be that of Hannibal, and their “*Dissertation on the Passage of Hannibal over the Alps*” (London, 1828), is so conclusive, that the author, who has three times visited the Little Saint Bernard, cannot conceive how any one acquainted with the Alps, and especially with that Pass, can withhold his conviction that this was the route by which the Carthaginian army entered Italy.

* The author visited the Mont du Chat in 1829, and he concurs entirely upon this part of the subject with M. Deluc, and Messrs. Wickham and Cramer. The situation of the precipices, and the appearance of the pass, agree in a remarkable manner with the account of Polybius.

THE END.

ROUTE

LYONS TO TURIN,

BY

THE PASS OF THE MONT CENIS.

THE route by the Mont Cenis might be considered as properly commencing at the conjunction of the rivers Arc and Isere; but as the range of mountains which extends south of the Jura, from the Rhone to the Isere, presents a formidable barrier between France and Savoy, which formerly rendered access to Chamberry, from Lyons, very difficult, the author has chosen to commence his illustrations of the Pass of the Cenis at Lyons, and complete them at Turin.

Lyons is seated between the Rhone and the Saone, near the confluence of these rivers, and, probably, owes to its situation its commercial celebrity: it lies in the direct route to the Cenis from Paris,* and its environs exhibit some of the most beautiful scenery in France. From the church of St. Mary Fourvières, which overlooks the city, the vast plains watered by the Rhone and the Ain are seen extending to the Jura, and to the snowy ranges of the Savoy mountains; and in clear weather, even beyond and above these, Mont Blanc can be seen, appearing to be rather an object of the sky than of the earth, hovering like a mighty spirit.†

* The traveller who wishes to go by the most interesting route to Lyons is recommended to go from Paris by Dijon, the Côte d'Or, Chalons sur Saone, and thence to Lyons by the *coche d'eau*.

† The view from the right bank of the Saone, near to where this river merges its waters, and loses its name, in the Rhone, is one of the most picturesque of Lyons. Plate the first.

The road from Lyons towards Chamberry, through Bourgoin, as far as Tour du Pin, is dull and uninteresting; but, soon after leaving this little town, the traveller arrives at the mountains by which he enters Savoy; these, until the opening of the road by the *route of the Grotto*, near Les Echelles, presented an almost insurmountable barrier against any carriage. So great were the difficulties, that we find, from the records of early travellers, that they arrived at Chamberry, on their way to the Cenis, by a considerable *détour*, either by Geneva or by Grenoble. But there were three paths practicable for mules across these mountains to Chamberry, besides that which is now the great road to the Cenis.* The first from Pont-Beauvoison, by Aiguebellette; the second by St. Genix and Novalesse; these were over the mountain de l'Epine, and were the most direct, but they were extremely difficult. The third, which crossed the Mont du Chat at the northern extremity of the range from Yenne to Bourget, appears to have been a road known to the Romans, from the remains of a temple, inscriptions, &c., which have been found on this passage of the mountain.†

At Pont-Beauvoison, on the *Guiers riv*, a river which is the boundary line between France and Sardinia, the *douaniers* of the respective governments are stationed. After crossing the bridge the road ascends the right bank of the river, and at length enters abruptly the defile of La Caille. Here the traveller should turn to enjoy the last view of France, and look back upon the beautiful scene which he is about to leave. From the plain the road ascends the mountain side, and then abruptly enters a ravine, at a considerable height above a

* The author of the present work has adverted to these roads to shew the difficulty which formerly existed in travelling from Lyons to Chamberry before the great road was made, by which carriages now proceed to these Alps, and traverse them with equal facility.

† It has been satisfactorily shewn, in the "Dissertation on the Passage of Hannibal across the Alps, by a Member of the University of Oxford," adverted to in the illustrations of the pass of the Little Saint Bernard, that this passage was the route of Hannibal, and the Mont du Chat, the first Alps at which he arrived, the spot on which he encountered the Allobroges.

stream, which foams beneath in its narrow and often concealed bed.* The route thence leads to Les Echelles,† a little town which owes its name to the mode of passing a cavern in its vicinity, through which formerly lay the only path to Chamberry. Those who travelled by the old road, ascended ladders placed on the face of the rock, to the height of one hundred feet; they then entered a cavern, and after climbing more than eighty feet through it, regained the day, in a deep cleft of the mountain; and a path, of which some vestiges remain, like a Roman pavement, enabled the traveller, with comparative ease and freedom from danger, to attain the summit of this extraordinary passage. This was an undertaking always dangerous to the unskilful, and often impracticable, for the cavern was the *embouchure* of the waters from the ravine above; and as the snow and torrents often interrupted the passage, it was only in the most favourable seasons that the undertaking could be accomplished. When the policy of a more intimate intercourse with France suggested itself to the enterprising mind of Charles Emmanuel the Second, Duke of Savoy, he determined to make a road here practicable for carriages; and the most celebrated act of his reign was the accomplishment of this great undertaking, which was called the *route of the Grotto*. By lowering the cleft in the mountain, and terracing a descent to Les Echelles, he made a road which was long considered one of the most extraordinary productions of human effort. A monument in the road contains a tablet, and the remains of an inscription, which was written by Emmanuel Tesoro, though usually attributed to the Abbé St. Réal, commemorative of the construction of this route. The monument betrays numerous marks of musket-balls, received in a severe contest upon this spot between some

* J. J. Rousseau has recorded among his follies, that it was here, on his way to revisit Madame des Warrens, at Les Charmettes, he enjoyed the pleasure of rolling stones from the road into the roaring torrent below, and observing them bound from ledge to ledge before they reached their goal in the depth and distance.

† An excursion from Les Echelles to the Grand Chartreuse can be accomplished easily in a few hours, and it is the best point to start from on a visit to this secluded spot.

French republicans and Savoyards, in the early part of the French revolution : but a paper sold by an old soldier, a *cantonnier*,* who keeps a hovel, and sells *eau-de-vie*, at the end of the new gallery, furnishes not only all of the inscription, which the balls of the revolutionists have made deficient, but a bombastic translation, in French, for the edification and amusement of travellers.†

CAROLVS · EMMANVEL · II
 SABAVDIE · DVX · PEDEMONTIS · PRINCEPS · CYPRI · REX
 PVBLICA · FELICITATE · PARTA · SINGVLORVM · COMMODIS · INTENTVS
 BREVIOREM · SECVRIOREMQVE · VIAM · REGIAM
 A · NATVRA · OCCVLSAM · ROMANIS · INTENTATAM · CÆTERIS · DESPERATAM
 DELECTIS · SCOPVLORVM · REPAGVLIS · ÆQVATA · MONTIVM · INIQVITATE
 QVÆ · CERVICIBVS · IMMINEBANT · PEDIBVS · PRÆCIPITIA · SVBSTERNENS
 ÆTERNIS · POPVLORVM · COMMERCIIIS · PATEFECIT
 ANNO · MDCLXX.

The work thus recorded was certainly one of great difficulty, and much was accomplished in forming, in such a situation, even a narrow, steep, and difficult road : it served its purpose, however, above one hundred and fifty years. In 1803 this road was condemned by the French engineers ; and Napoleon has, by one of the most extraordinary of his great works, superseded the old road, and left it, with its monumental record, and the old cavern of Les Echelles, to be visited only as curiosities. The present road avoids altogether the direction of the old one : it sweeps round the little valley above the village of Les Echelles, rises by a gradual ascent, and when on a level with the road formerly attained by the route of the Grotto, enters, at once, the perpendicular face of the rock ; and a magnificent gallery twenty-five feet high proceeds a thousand feet‡ through the rock, over a road twenty-five

* A person stationed to keep the roads in order.

† L'an mil six cent soixante-dix, après avoir rendu heureux ses peuples, voulant encore étendre ses bienfaits, CHARLES EMMANUEL II., Duc de Savoie, Prince de Piémont, Roi de Chypre, força les roches à s'ouvrir, soumit au niveau les montagne . . . fit rouler sous les pieds leurs cimes menaçantes, et, supérieur aux Romains, qui n'essayerent pas une si glorieuse entreprise, supérieur à tant d'autres qui ne purent qu'en désespérer en la tentant, vainqueur enfin de la nature,—il ouvrit cette voie triomphante, qui, pour toujours, assure aux peuples divers les moyens de s'unir entre eux.

‡ 307 metres : a metre is about 1-13th more than an English yard.

rapidly down to St. Giacomo, and afterwards to Misocco. From St. Bernardin, Misocco is only three leagues, but the actual descent is above 3000 feet. In the course of the descent from St. Bernardin to Misocco, many waterfalls arrest the attention of the traveller: the finest of these is near the bridge of St. Giacomo, where, turning to the left into a wood, and descending a little way on the right bank of the torrent, a very fine and picturesque scene is presented of the Moesa, foaming in its violent descent amidst the rocks, and throwing up a mist, in which a beautiful iris may be seen, under favourable circumstances of time and weather.*

The change is very striking, from the cold, and its restraints upon vegetation on the Bernardin, to the climate immediately below Misocco, where wine and Indian corn are raised, and the mulberry is successfully cultivated for silkworms; various forest-trees luxuriate, and the sun darts his southern rays upon the traveller, who two hours before shivered in the bleak and cold regions of the Alps. Near Misocco, one of the most beautiful scenes in the Grisons is presented, where the valley is closed in by the hill, upon which are the ruins of the castle of Misocco.† On the right is the range of mountains which separate the valleys of Misocco and Calanka; and on the left the precipitous bases of the Monte Roggioni and the Monte Luadre. Down the side of the latter amidst rocks and woods, several cataracts descend into the Moesa, which deeply rolls through a defile on the left of the castle: below the ruins are seen the church of Soazzo and the lower valley of Misocco.‡

* Plate the Third.

† The early history of this castle is obscure, but conjecture has attributed its erection to the Goths, who availed themselves of its commanding situation to guard the pass of the Bernardin against the irruptions of the Franks into Rhaetia. It was possessed by the Barons de Sax from 933 to 1482, when it was sold, with the valley of Misocco, to the celebrated and noble Milanese, Trivulzio, under whom the people of the valley became free citizens of the Grisons. He greatly distinguished himself in the wars of Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

‡ Plate the Fourth.

Soon after leaving the castle of Misocco, the traveller arrives at Buffalora, a spot remarkable for a very fine cataract, where, early in the afternoon, the sun may be seen shining through the torrent, as it descends from a great height in a single jet: the water, in dispersing into mist, intercepts the sun's rays, and exhibits a blaze of illumined particles: it is singular and beautiful to observe a waterfall under such circumstances. There is no valley in the Alps into which such numerous, varied, and beautiful torrents descend as into the Val Misocco. From Lostallo, three quarters of a post below Misocco, the distance to Bellinzona is only a post and a half; the descent is so gradual through the valley below the castle of Misocco, that in four leagues it does not exceed 800 feet. Before arriving at Roveredo, the traveller passes the ruins of the castles of Grono and Calanka.*

Roveredo is the chief town of the lower Val Misocco; below this place the valley widens. About a league from Roveredo is St. Vittore, the last village in the canton of the Grisons. The canton of the Tessin commences at the village of Lumino. Shortly after, the Val Levantine is entered, which conducts to Bellinzona; the road thence to the Lago Maggiore was described in the Pass of the St. Gothard.† Another road from Bellinzona leads by the Monte Cenero to Lugano, in three hours, through a road admirably constructed, and upon which many striking points of view are presented, especially on the approach to Lugano, where, looking down over the vineyards, the town appears finely situated, on the shores of the lake of Lugano, the most beautiful of the northern lakes of Italy.‡

* Formerly, a pass existed by the valley of Calanka into the Grisons over the Mont Adula, and near the glaciers of the Rhine; but an extension of the glaciers has destroyed this route entirely.

† A new road is now made from Locarno to Brissago on the frontier of the Tessin; and to Intra on the Lago Maggiore within the states of Sardinia, the intermediate portion is in progress, to make a road, in connexion with the route of the Bernardin, along the shores of the Lago Maggiore. This is undertaken by the King of Sardinia, just as the Austrians are forming a road to connect Milan with the Stelvio, along the shores of the Lake of Como.

‡ Plate the Fifth.

of the Doire and the plains of Piemont lie before him; and the foreground of this beautiful scene is rich with chestnuts, walnuts, vines, and the productions of a fruitful soil.

On entering *La Chiave d'Italia*, as Susa has been called, the ruins of the Fort of La Brunette are passed: in its days of power it was so cautiously watched, that a stranger observed to stop, and look at it for a moment, was ordered to pass on. It was considered one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, and guarded both the roads, to the Cenis and the Genève. The early importance of Susa is attested by many Roman remains: among these is the celebrated arch raised by Cottius in honour of Augustus; beneath which the route lay through the valley of Oulx to the Mont Genève.

After leaving Susa, the road crosses the Cenisella, a stream which descends from the Cenis and flows into the Doire. At Busolino this river is passed: thence it flows on the left of the road until it reaches the Po below Turin.

Among the feudal remains which the traveller passes in the valley of the Doire, below Susa, are those of the picturesque chateau of St. Jorio; but the most extraordinary ruins are those of the monastery of St. Michel,* on the Monte Pirchiriano, above St. Ambrogio. The founder was Hugues de Décousu, who went to Rome and obtained absolution for some crime which he had committed, from the Pope. Hugues, in his gratitude, promised to build a church on his return, which he did on the Monte Pirchiriano, and consecrated it to St. Michel. Privileges were granted to the new establishment by Pope Silvester; and it soon became, under the rules of St. Benoît, so celebrated for its splendour and power, that its abbots boasted of having founded and restored one hundred and forty churches and rich abbeys in France and Italy.†

* Fifth Plate.

† Sanssure and Milan both describe their visits to the ruins of the monastery, and the latter gives an interesting sketch of its history, but without mentioning the period of its foundation. The difficulty of erecting such an edifice on the mountain must have been very great, as it requires an hour and a half to attain its site. When attained, the mass of ruins appears enormous: a part of these is entered by a large flight of steps. There are many ancient tombs of the monks; some of them are open,

On one of its towers there was, until lately, a telegraph belonging to a series which communicated between Paris and Milan.

The road from St. Ambrogio passes through Avigliana and Rivoli, where there is a chateau belonging to the court of Sardinia. From Rivoli, a fine avenue, nearly two leagues in length, extends to Turin.

A description of Turin can be found in almost every topographical work on Italy; it is precluded from these illustrations, by the limits of the text. The author, however, cannot pass unnoticed the view of the city from the hill of the Superga. The church on its summit is distant from Turin about five miles, and the ascent to it is so very steep that it employs above two hours to arrive there;* but the scene from the summit richly repays the trouble of reaching it, and exceeds any of a similar character that the author has ever enjoyed. Thence are seen in the plain beneath, Turin, the Po winding by the city, and collecting the tributary streams that enrich the fertile country through which they flow, the avenue to Rivoli, and the valley of the Doire, leading to the Mont Cenis, the lower ranges of the mountains, studded with towns

and the bodies can be seen in a dry state, like the mummies of the *Guanches*: they are spoken of as having been objects of curiosity and reverence for many ages. Some Gothic epitaphs remain; one of these marks the tomb of Rondolphe of Montebello, who died in 1359; and another of Sebastian Serrai, a cardinal, who was abbot of this monastery in 1577: there is also an ancient tomb without an inscription, said to be that of Comte Thomas, a bastard of the house of Savoy, who lived in 1233, and who is recorded as a great benefactor to this abbey.

The view from the monastery is described, by those who have visited it, as magnificent, extending from the vast ramparts of the Cenis, through the lower valley of the Doire, which winds beneath the monastery, and enriches a scene that extends to Turin, the Monte Superga, and the extensive plains which, beyond these, melt into the horizon.

* It is generally known that the church was built by Victor Amadeus, in consequence of a vow which he made to raise such an edifice, if Heaven assisted him to relieve the city of Turin, which in 1706 was besieged by the French. Turin was delivered, but this votive building was not begun until 1715; it was completed in 1731. It is a splendid object to all the surrounding country. Its internal splendour, however, has been much overrated; it exhibits a mixture of magnificence and meanness, and much of what appears to be marble, is an imitation in painted wood and plaster, and even some of the tombs of the sovereigns of Sardinia, for this is their cemetery, share in this pretence.

and villages, and above and beyond the vast range of the high Alps, extending from the Viso to the Monte Rosa: these present a magnificent *coup d'œil*. The view* in this work is taken from a vineyard, on the descent from the church, and the scene is limited, in the horizon, to the range of the Cottian Alps, from the beautiful peak of the Monte Viso to the Mont Cenis.

There is much obscurity in the early history of the pass of the Mont Cenis. Though it has been for many ages the most frequented passage of the Alps between France and Italy,† there is no certain evidence that it was known to the ancient Romans. That Marius, or Caesar, or Pompey,‡ or Augustus, traversed the Alps by the Cenis, or made a road across it, is by no means clear. The commentators upon the early writers appear to have confounded this passage with that of the Mont Genève, as both of them meet at Susa. Neither in the Antonine Itinerary nor the Theodosian Tables is mention made of the Cenis; neither is there any station on the mountain nor in the vale of the Arc noticed.§ Those writers who have reported that the passage by the Cenis was the route of a Roman army, or general, have usually given descriptions which

* Plate Sixth.

† The Italians, from this circumstance, have given it the name of the *Strada Romana*.

‡ The fragment preserved by Sallust of a letter from Pompey to the senate, which is supposed to refer to a road that Pompey made across the Cenis, can in the judgment of those acquainted with the passes of the Alps, refer only to the Mont Genève; and Ammianus Marcellinus, who is referred to by Gibbon, as if to support his opinion of Constantine's passage by the Cenis, describes most distinctly the passage by the Mont Genève. Gibbon says that "Constantine preferred the road of the Cottian Alps, or, as it is now called, of Mont Cenis, and led his troops with such active diligence, that he descended into the plains of Piedmont before the Court of Maxentius had any certain intelligence of his departure from the banks of the Rhine;" but he is neither borne out by Eusebius nor Zosimus in this statement. The latter merely says, that "Constantine having collected an army from the barbarians whom he had subdued, from the Germans and other Celtic nations, and also from levies in Britain, which altogether amounted to 90,000 infantry and 8000 horse, descended from the Alps into Italy."

§ Simler, in *de Alpibus Commentarius*, says, "Nor yet do we think that this mountain alone is the Cottian Alps, but others also by which the passage lies into Gaul, between the Maritime and Grian Alps; for, from Susa through Novelesia and Ferrara, one ascends Mont Dionysius, whose summit is called La Posta; thence one descends into the valley Morienna to Luneberg, where one perceives a statue of

can only apply to the pass of the Genève, and sometimes even state that its route lay under the arch of Cottius. This arch is placed at the entrance of the valley of the Doria Susana, which leads from Susa to the Mont Genève, and not to the passage of the Mont Cenis. The inscription upon the arch of Susa, though it mentions the people around and beyond the Mont Genève, even to the Caturiges, who were subject to Cottius, takes no notice of any on the Cenis, nor of the Garoceli, who were known to have inhabited the Upper Maurienne.*

It appears to be the fact, that the historians of Charlemagne are the first who name the Cenis, and they relate that Pepin crossed this mountain to attack Astolphus, King of the Lombards, and assist Pope Stephen III. Charlemagne often crossed the Cenis during his wars with the Lombards; and his son, Louis le Débonnaire, is reported to have been the founder of the hospital on the plain of the Cenis. Charles the Bald, the son of Louis, after crossing that mountain, died, according to the annals of St. Bertin, at a miserable village, Brios, near Bramante. His death was imputed to poison administered to him by his Jew physician.

Dionysius placed on a column in the forum, which is a subject of worship to the Gauls, and from which the mountain is supposed to derive its name. Some call this mountain Cnissium, others Cinerum. Through this pass some write that Charlemagne, King of France, led an army against Desiderium, King of the Lombards."

* Why the pass of the Cenis was not so early known as that of the Genève and some others, may be thus explained. In seeking a passage across the Alps, the general and most obvious course seems to have been, to ascend the valleys and courses of rivers on one side, and descend by the nearest valley on the other. The Cenis on the side of the Lanslebourg offers no valley to explore, for the course of the river Arc is from the Mont Iseran, where it rises; and at the foot of the Mont Cenis, in the valley of the Arc, there is nothing to indicate a passage by this mountain. There is no doubt that the pass of the little Mont Cenis, from Bramante to Exilles, and that of the Col de la Rue, from Modane to Bardonneche and Oulx, were known very long before the present pass of the Cenis; but both these passes have valleys descending to the Arc which would tempt the traveller to explore them. The latter, *Mons Raulus*, seems to have been one of the routes adopted by Julius Cæsar, when he crossed the Alps to suppress the inroad of the Helvetii; and troops often crossed by these passes during the wars of France and Savoy. It may be said that the ascent of the Mont Cenis might have been made by the course of the river Cenisella, which offers on the Italian side the usual appearance of a passage. It must be considered that the Alps were not explored by the Italians, but by their invaders, the Gauls, who poured their hordes into the fertile country of Italy, to luxuriate in a soil which claimed from them less labour as a recompense for its enjoyment.

From this period the pass of the Cenis appears to have become the usual route for travellers from France into Italy, and frequent mention is made of it in the military annals of Piedmont. Many writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries relate their adventures on crossing these Alps : among them Condé, Cardinal Bentivoglio, and other distinguished travellers, have recorded their admiration of the grandeur of the scenes, or the dangers and pleasures of their journey across these mountains.*

But it remained for Napoleon Buonaparte to make this pass available to travellers at all seasons of the year, and associate his name with its history as long as human record can last. In 1802 the first consul decided upon opening a communication by a grand route between the Maurienne and Piedmont; and, after a careful survey by M. Dausse, chief engineer, of the different cols which led from one of these countries to the other, that of the grand Mont Cenis was chosen.

In 1803 the works of the new road were begun, and so far completed in 1810, that, during that year 2911 carriages, 14,037 carts and waggons, and 37,255 horses and mules traversed the mountain.

Not more than five months of effective labour could be accomplished in a year. Generally the works began about the middle of May, and ended in the beginning of October.† The expense of these astonishing works has been estimated at 7,460,000 francs, nearly 300,000*l.* sterling.

* Grosley, in speaking of the guides of Lanslebourg, says, that in bearing the *chaise à porteur*, the old mode of travelling across the Cenis, "they relieve each other with great facility, and converse gaily with their charges, of the princes, cardinals, and generals, whom they have borne across the mountains, and on the generosity of their highnesses : one said his father had assisted to carry the Duc de Vendôme, who was *le plus drôle de corps du monde*. To an inquiry, if a certain captain of Algerines, called Hamûbal, had not passed that way with a great army, about two thousand years ago, one replied that they had heard speak of that man, and that the people of the little St. Bernard said that it was by their country that he had passed ; but that the Maréchal de Villars and the Cardinal de Polignac had assured the people of Lanslebourg that he went by the Cenis.

† The scenes in summer, during the progress of the works, must have been very animated : from the Tavernettes to the plain of St. Nicolas sometimes more than two

The establishment of twenty-five houses of refuge along the line of road, renders the passage of the Cenis, even in winter, perfectly safe. These houses are placed on the spots the most dangerous, and become asylums against the tempests that sometimes rage in the Alps.

From Lanslebourg to Susa, about nine posts and a half, this magnificent road is everywhere thirty feet wide, and so easy of ascent, on either side of the mountain, that, from Susa to the plain of the Cenis, the journey can be accomplished in four hours in a carriage; and from Lanslebourg to the Tavernettes, in little more than half the time.

By a decree of the 20th January, 1811, the French government established a tax on the route of the Mont Cenis, as a fund for the payment of the cantonniers; which produced, from the 1st of March, 1811, to the 1st of March, 1813, 328,174 francs, 13,127*l.* The King of Sardinia continues this tax.

It was, at one time, contemplated by Napoleon to erect a monument on the Cenis to commemorate the conquest of Europe by the French; and twenty-five millions of francs, one million sterling, were destined to its expense. M. Derrin, who was engineer in chief, charged with the works of the Mont Cenis some time before their completion, had many questions submitted to him by the French Institute, upon the practicability of erecting a permanent trophy on the plain of the Cenis. Too many difficulties, however, presented themselves, and the plan was abandoned. No one will feel that its accomplishment was necessary to the memory or the honour of Napoleon, whilst this stupendous work—his conquest of the Alps—is seen in the magnificent route of the Cenis.

thousand workmen were employed; most of them *barracked* on the banks of the lake, 1940 metres above the level of the sea. At sunset a last salute announced the close of the labours of the day; and during half an hour, the reports of blasting the rocks reverberated in the mountains: a little after, the camp was illuminated by the fires of the workmen preparing their evening repast.



